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OF LITERATURE

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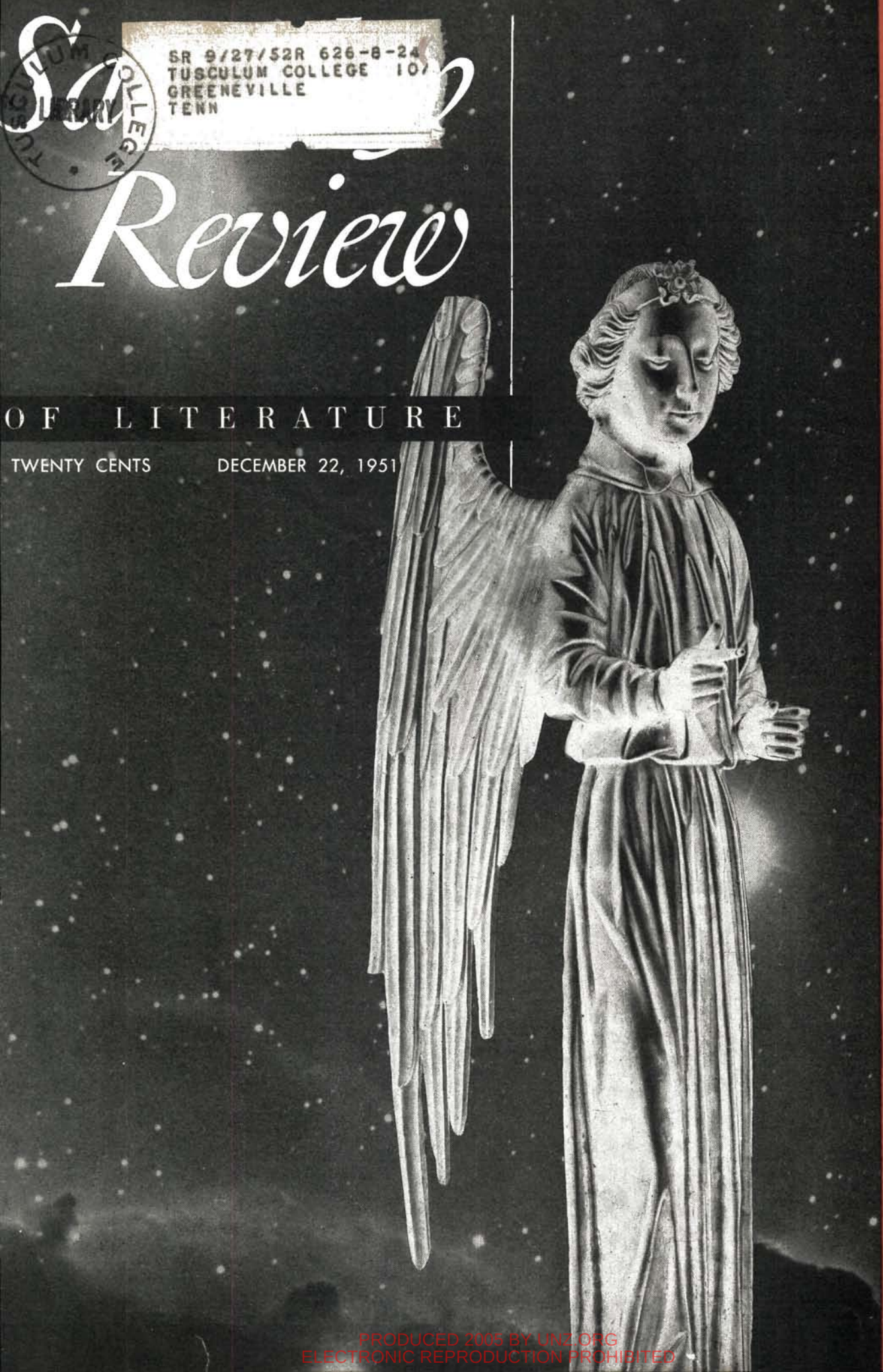

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December 22, 1951

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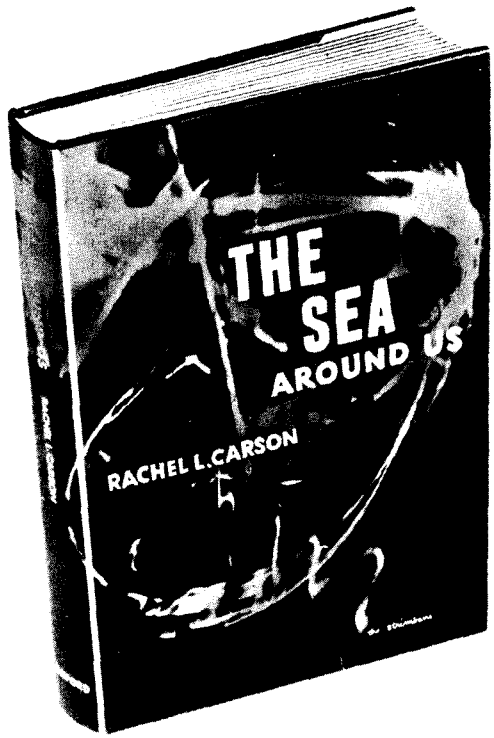
FOR CHRISTMAS

Give the book the critics* are giving



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When the *Saturday Review of Literature* polled its regular critics on what books they individually were giving for Christmas, The Sea Around Us was far and away the favorite choice. "It's heartening to know," says the *Saturday Review*, "that they don't just plan to pass on old review copies. It also speaks well for the intellectual level of this country."

...the book that other authors* like

*

MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS
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ESTHER FORBES
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HERMAN WOUK
CORNELIA OTIS SKINNER
ROBERT CUSHMAN MURPHY
EDWIN WAY TEALE
LOUIS BROMFIELD
JOHN P. MARQUAND
WALTER PRICHARD EATON
DUMAS MALONE

For its Christmas Number, the *New York Herald Tribune* asked a group of authors to name the books they liked. All the authors listed on the right named The Sea Around Us.

The Sea Around Us

By RACHEL L. CARSON

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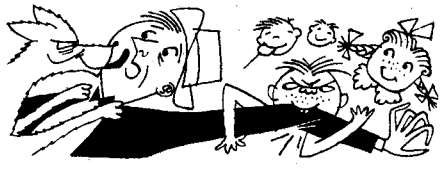
TRADE Winds

ANECDOTAGE

A LONG-TIME INMATE of a displaced persons camp finally wangled a visa and set sail for America, faithfully promising to send for his wife the moment he achieved a respectable bank balance. He prospered from the start in New York, getting a job backstage for a long-run hit that had only one setting. His duties consisted of playing pinochle six nights a week, with Wednesday and Saturday matinees, for which he received a pay envelope each Friday of $198.60. Unfortunately, with his streak of luck, he forgot all about his wife—until he received a letter from her some six months after his arrival on these shores. Never having bothered to learn to read, our hero persuaded a fellow toiler to divulge the letter's contents to him. His friend, who had a voice like a foghorn on the *Queen Elizabeth*, opened the letter and read in a hoarse bellow, "Why haven't you sent for me? I must have some money right away. Minnie."

The immigrant snatched the note angrily from his friend's hands, stuffed it into his pocket, and conveniently forgot about it until a month later when he found himself standing next to Playwright Mississippi Mahoney in the wings. Again he asked, "Will you read my wife's letter to me, please?" This time it was the soft, cultivated voice of the playwright that intoned, "Why haven't you sent for me? I must have some money right away. Minnie." The immigrant nodded with satisfaction. "Anyhow," he remarked, tearing the letter into shreds, "I'm glad to notice she's changed her tone."

ARTHUR KROCK, FAMOUS WASHINGTON newshawk, was invited to a week-end party at Senator Harry Byrd's Virginia estate. What's more, the Senator sent his family car around to give Krock a lift. Krock discovered, however, that a ferocious-looking great Dane was sprawled across the front seat, while the rear seat was loaded with a bevy of the Senator's small



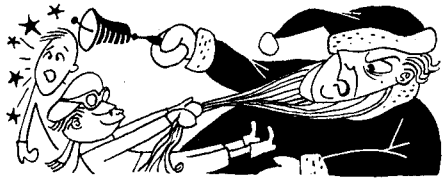
grandchildren. After some hesitation he decided that it was safer to cast his lot with the kids in the back. It was a grievous error. The car had just about gotten under way when one of the kids bit him. . . . An old bishop in the nation's capital was sick to death of the socials and embassy parties he was expected to attend every other afternoon. At one of them he entered wearily, glanced sourly at the over-familiar cast of characters, and sank into the nearest chair. The hostess asked coyly, "A spot of tea, Bishop?" "No tea," he

growled. "Coffee, Bishop?" "No coffee." An understanding woman, she whispered in his ear, "Scotch and water, Bishop?" Said the Bishop, brightening, "No water.". . . At an angry session of a medical convention prominent surgeons were quoting long pages of statistics to prove their opposing theories. Dr. John Finley, of Tulane, reminded them, "A surgeon uses statistics as a drunk uses a lamppost: more for support than illumination.". . . Speaking of drunks, one came staggering home at three in the morning to find his wife waiting for him with a shillelagh. "Before you begin," he warned her, "I want you to know I been sitting up with a very sick friend." "A likely story," mocked the wife. "What was his name?" The husband gave this problem deep thought, then announced triumphantly, "He was so sick he couldn't tell me.". . . A restraining word from the late Judge Woolsey: "Before judging a man by his associates, remember that Judas Iscariot traveled in the best of company."

L. BRACKEN, OF LAKELAND, Florida, writes about a small boy who stood gazing at a horse and wagon while the milkman was making his deliveries. When the milkman reappeared the boy observed, "Mister, that horse is never going to get you home." "Why not, sonny?" asked the milkman. The small boy explained, "He just lost all his gasoline.". . . A couple from Maine, driving clear to Californy, tarried at a New Mexico roadside inn for a bite of dinner. Back from the reception hall came the red-faced wife to inquire, "Quick, Otto, what am I: a heifer or a steer?" . . . This Maine pair had a neighbor who took no stock whatever in galavantin' around the country. In fact, he had been as far as Bangor only four times in his life, although his property was less than fifty miles from the city limits. On his last visit he suffered a painful experience. A fire siren sounded, and he hastily steered his horse and buggy over to the curbstone. When the engine had clanged by he proceeded on his way, only to be smacked squarely in the rear by the hook-and-ladder truck. When the doctors restored the poor man to consciousness they asked, "Why didn't you get out of the way? You must have heard the siren." "I heard it all right," he answered grimly, "but it wasn't the durn engine that hit me at all. It was that truckload of crazy house-painters careening along behind it!"

STANLEY McMICHAEL, author of "How to Make Money in Real Estate," tells about an operator who accumulated a loft building, a marble yard with dock privileges, a factory site, and a summer garden. All these he proposed to swap with another man who owned a row of tenements, a small subdivision, an abandoned lime kiln, and a farm. After a month of weighty negotiations the first man explained to his wife, "As it stands now all he has to do is assume a $90,000 mortgage on the loft building, while I take over a second mortgage on the subdivision. Get me?" "I guess so," said the wife wearily, "but if you have all the details worked out so cleverly what's holding up the deal?" "I sign nothing," was the firm reply, "until he gives me four dollars in cash." . . . During the recent general election in England a Parliamentary candidate in the Midlands concluded his intemperate harangue with, "Ladies and gents, if one dishonest word has passed my lips on this rostrum, may a thunderbolt from the skies strike me down." At this precise moment the temporary platform on which he stood collapsed, and the orator disappeared from view. The audience sat spellbound. A few moments later the disheveled candidate crawled out of the wreckage, his head bloody but unbowed. A voice from the rear exclaimed, "Oh, damn! It missed him!"

AH, THIS HAPPY YULETIDE spirit! One scout reports that Mrs. Lodadoe bought



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Mr. Lodadoe a sixty-eight-foot yacht for a Christmas surprise and instructed the salesman, "Be sure to wrap it so he can't guess what it is." Mrs. Bemish called to her husband, "Last year we sent Mother a chair. What do you think we ought to do for her this year?" Mr. Bemish called back, "Electrify it." At a busy Chicago intersection a little cherub gave Santa's whiskers a yank, allowed them to snap smartly back into place. Santa retaliated by taking a pass at the cherub with his bell. He missed and landed instead on the noggin of another lad. The latter's father promptly dropped Saint Nick for a count of nine with a roundhouse right, and was in turn conked by a sturdy representative of the Chicago police force. When peace on earth and good will to men had been restored Santa was in jail and two of the others were in the hospital.

FOR, YOU, HOWEVER, WE HAVE wonderful news. The famous research firm of Schmeerkase and Company, in the heart of the richest manuscript-growing country of old Bucks County, has made a laboratory test of the new TRADE WINDS model for 1952 and proves conclusively that it is a columnier column: fresher, freer of coal tar, nicotine, and puns by Ben Huebsch, better for the gums, surer to annoy Winchell, and packed more tightly with unessential information than ever before. Yes sirree! So run now to your nearest dealer, if you can find one, and remember, that on page four of *SRL*, you'll find TRADE WINDS, 5 to 1.

A joyous Christmas! And a prosperous New Year!

—BENNETT CERF.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 925)

PERCY MACKAYE:
*MY LADY DEAR, ARISE!**

She was a child of February,
Of tree-top grey and smothered stream,
Of cedar and the marsh rosemary,
Of snowbird and the sunset's dream. . . .
Veiled in those February skies,
With summer singing in her breast,
And April laughing in her eyes.

*Child of February, for her Birthday, 1905; Songs and Sonnets in Remembrance of Marion Morse MacKaye (Mrs. Percy MacKaye).

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

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A Good Time to Be Alive

EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER

Edgar Ansel Mowrer

I GREW UP in what was undoubtedly one of the most secure places and periods that have ever existed: the American Middle West before 1914. The more I read the more I reacted against my environment: I regretted not having lived in a more exciting place and time—Benvenuto Cellini's Rome, perhaps, or Drake's Spanish Main, the Paris of the Three Musketeers, George Washington's thirteen colonies. Those were the days. Oh, for the life of Uncle Ethan on that Union gunboat at Vicksburg!

But with the carnage of World War I, the subsequent revolutions and famines, the world-wide economic depression, the march of Fascism and Nazism, and the holocaust of World War II, that secure environment receded further and further into a virtually incredible past. Since 1914 there has been no lack of excitement to complain of. Indeed there has been so much that at times the unending crises, the bloodshed, the tensions have made me reverse my boyhood longings and caused me almost to pine instead for the stable, neat world of Jane Austen.

But not for long. For there is a challenge today that cannot help but quicken the pulse and whet the appetite for participation. It is a good time to be alive. It is a time when anyone can, if he so chooses, find satisfaction rarely attainable at other junctures of world history—participation in the struggle for essential values.

No personal adventure can be more fascinating than a supreme adventure of the human race. It is that kind of voyage on which today's Americans can embark, and where they can find a real sense of well-being. The West is undergoing a decisive test. For the first time in about 400 years its leadership is being seriously challenged. In being called upon to face that challenge Americans are confronted both with danger and with an unequaled opportunity. Ahead of them lies the great assignment of preserving the best of the past and shaping a richer future.

Physically we are called upon to defend our country and the free peoples generally by the production of increasingly deadly weapons, regardless of cost. But this is only the beginning. The Communist world is challenging our entire system of beliefs, starting with God and ending with the First Amendment to the American Constitution. It is challenging the economic system whereby we have prospered. It is challenging our ethical practice —particularly our hang-over of human discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, or pigmentation.

All societies have known social rebels. They have in the past accomplished little. Today the rebels are formidable. The reason is, I suspect, that modern technology really promises (for the first time in history) the possibility of a better living for all. If it can, then obviously it must. Astride of this argument the Communists have ridden out and conquered a third of mankind. A second third resist them. The final third are still undecided.

IN the struggle between the USSR and the USA for the allegiance of this decisive mass all we have taken for granted has come under critical scrutiny. Outsiders are asking not only how good is our inheritance in itself, but how we are living up to it.

Merely to preserve and exercise the best of our inheritance is a large order. Yet far more is being required of us. Like Isocrates's Athenians, "we stand in need of some durable plan that will forever put an end to our hostilities and unite us by lasting ties of mutual affection and fidelity." Like him, our wisest are demanding a "glorious enterprise that those who have been so long oppressed may in some period of their lives know what it is to be happy."

That enterprise cannot in the twentieth century be less than world-wide. Here, surely, is such opportunity as man has never known.

Some, of course, will deny this. Man, according to Marshall B. Davidson, "will never again have the opportunity that opened to him four and a half centuries ago with the discovery of America . . . an entirely new world,

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Edgar Ansel Mowrer has been covering the European scene for American newspapers since World War I and won a Pulitzer Prize for his correspondence. His most recent book is "Challenge and Decision," a program for America.

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uncorrupted by the mistakes of civilization, remote enough to serve as a refuge from unwanted interference, large and empty enough for men to give free rein to their hopes and plans for a better life." Professor Walter Prescott Webb is even less cheerful. He believes that the Western world has been enjoying a 400-year boom primarily owing to the exploitation of undeveloped countries. Now that it has reached the end of the "last frontier" the boom will collapse. What is worse, those "boom-born institutions, democracy and capitalism," will collapse with it. "The individual, this cherished darling of modern history, attained his glory in an abnormal period when there was enough room to give him freedom and enough wealth to give him independence. . . . Historians and all thoughtful persons are bound by their obligation to say that there is no new frontier in sight comparable in magnitude to the one that was lost."

They may indeed be bound to say this—but only if they really believe, with the Marxists, that individualism, freedom, and democracy are by-products of material well-being.

Yet, even physically, how believe that there are in sight no other frontiers comparable to the "vast raw lands"? One such, always in sight and now almost accessible, is the moon. Another is the oceans — almost untapped sources of food, clothing, and vital minerals. A third, most scientists think, is atomic energy. President Conant, of Harvard, indicates a fourth—the sun, the source of all our energy. What amazing possibilities seem to lurk behind the new and startling thesis of *continuous creation!* If we ever can junk the basic principle of the conservation of energy for the certainty that fresh energy is continually pouring into an ever expanding universe, what new dreams may we not harbor?

Though these matters far exceed my competence, they certainly seem to show that the field of science, so brilliantly expanded during the last fifty years, shows no visible limits. Here at any time something can occur that will radically modify, if not solve, our present problems.

THE field of the arts is not less inviting. Ordinary men and women, formerly more or less excluded from civilization, are demanding spiritual nourishment. They need poetry at the same time moving and intelligible; novels that set forth the "higher problems" in a way they can understand; buildings that are functional yet something more than giant egg crates; painting that has returned from abstract form and private fantasy to the alphabet of nature. They might even take an interest in sculpture if it were to become less abstruse. This does not mean that there will be no place for artistic adventuring but that such adventuring can be currently important only if its discoveries are expressed in a way to interest that emerging majority which increasingly shapes the age. If Giotto could, why not Jones?

A truly explosive problem is the effect upon men of large-scale industry. How reconcile the individual industrial worker to the exasperating boredom of specialized activity whereby he lives? How prevent his irritations from accumulating to the point where they will collectively explode the system—and freedom with it? Unless something can be accomplished here—perhaps by some sort of cooperative ownership in the plant—technological civilization may turn out to be more complex than people can endure. Yet so far almost nothing seems to have been done about it.

Topping all other issues today, save that of civilized survival, is the problem of size: in the international field the expanding Big Power crushing and assimilating diversity; at home that oppressive trinity—the Big State, Big Business, and Big Labor. How can they be kept compatible with individual freedom? And, if not, how can they be diffused and balanced without intolerable loss of efficiency?

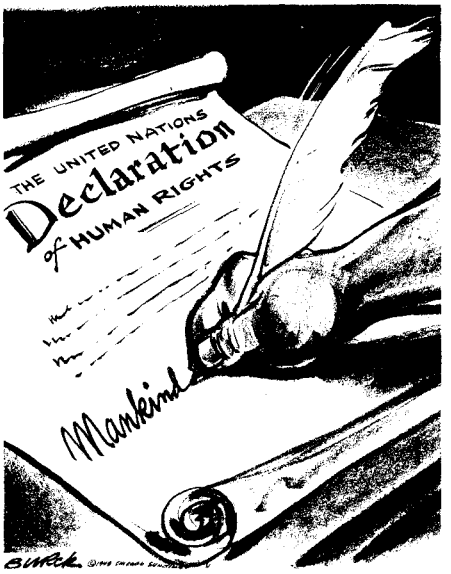
Never before, it seems to me, have so many ferments been active in so many different places. Never before have citizens been compelled to think about so many (and, if you will, so confusing) issues at the same time. Here is a bone for nearly everyone's teeth.

Now it is obvious that the kind of living which our era imposes inevitably precludes many intimate satisfactions and quiet joys. It seems at times in its mass aspects intolerably destructive of the highest *quality*. Above all, particularly to Americans who have until recently led a sheltered international existence, the sense of no longer being master of their fate causes an understandable dismay. Yet such dismay can be partially relieved by the thought that American security between the War of 1812 and World War I was in the historical sense abnormal. Few peoples or individuals have ever enjoyed the kind of isolated fortune which for a century behind our protecting oceans we took for granted.

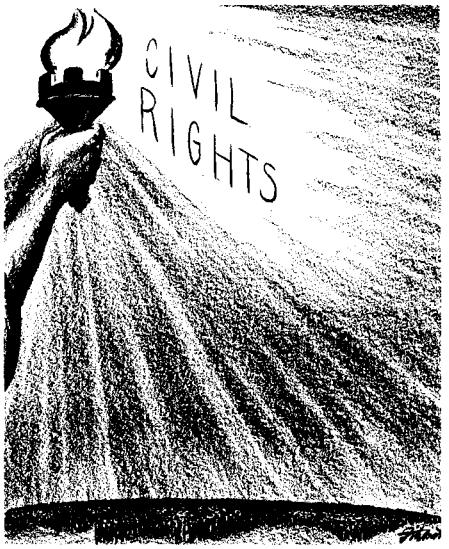
Our present insecurity is just an aggravated instance of man's normal fate. History is there to testify that

NO MORE FRONTIERS, SONNY?— LOOK THERE — WAY UP AHEAD — THERE'S ADVENTURE!— 'NUFF FOR BOTH OF US!
THE AGE OF ATOMIC ENERGY
THE PIONEER SPIRIT

—*Scott Long in the* Minneapolis Tribune.
"The New World."



—*Burck in the* Chicago Sun-Times.
"John Hancock—Twentieth Century."



—*Fitzpatrick in the* St. Louis Post-Dispatch.
Truman: "There is a serious gap between our ideals and some of our practices. This gap must be closed."

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man can live dangerously and like it, provided he sees in his precarious position a stimulus and not an intolerable imposition.

"Let but the cause seem beautiful, dear God, if we must die" is a prayer repeated down the centuries from the time of the siege of Troy.

It is in my opinion certain that mankind is approaching the moment when it must either eliminate the mass murder of man by man or regress toward ignominious barbarism. Putting an end to organized war is—after national defense—paradoxically our first American duty.

It would be absurd to expect the free and, for the most part, law-abiding peoples in the West to extend thanks this year to the theory-ridden brutes who from the Kremlin threaten this planet with atomic hell. Yet later generations may do just this. They may guess that, far from ruining the free world, pressure by doctrinaire slavers masked as 'liberators" brought about the salvation of free society in the twentieth century. They may feel sure that human ideals taken for granted lose their validity unless relived and restated. They may therefore conclude that in challenging the United States the USSR actually made it possible for the coming world-wide civilization to be born into freedom and not into slavery.

Stagnation can be a greater human enemy than convulsion. This is doubtless what Arnold Toynbee has in mind when he insists that each successive human civilization is the result of some peculiarly provoking challenge which rouses a section of humanity to some "hitherto unprecedented effort." It may indeed be that for human society as a whole an unusual release from tension would mean, not happiness, but death. "Under the man-made artificial conditions of the laboratory," writes Dr. R. R. Spencer ["Staying Alive," *SRL* Oct. 27], "a perfect paradise has been provided—for individuals—and in time the deadly monotony of ample food, ideal temperature, security and protection from natural enemies, and favorable conditions for growth and breeding caused the species to perish." Only "a variety of environmental experiences keeps the species on its toes."

Perhaps Adam and Eve had to leave the Garden of Eden in order that mankind could survive and develop.

The USA & The USSR.

As an old year is again replaced by a new one the problem overshadowing the future remains the same: What will Soviet Communism do? During the past few months Senator Robert A. Taft, the State Department's George F. Kennan, and editor John Fischer have written books proposing tactics and strategy for our still-continuing cold war. Now in "The Foreign Policy of the United States" (page 10) Felix Morley undertakes the problem, while in "The Only War We Seek" (below) Arthur Goodfriend states the issues as they appear to an American liberal. Newcomers to the lengthening shelf of useful books about the USSR, its people, and their rulers are Anatole G. Mazour's textbook "Russia: Past and Present" (page 11), Father Edmund A. Walsh's study of world Communism "Total Empire" (page 11), and Margaret Mead's anthropological attempt to understand a society in "Soviet Attitudes Toward Authority" (page 36).

Graphic Lessons in Policy

THE ONLY WAR WE SEEK. By Arthur Goodfriend. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. 128 *pp.* $3.

By James M. Minifie

THIS BOOK was inspired by President Truman. He told the compiler, with down-to-earth good sense: "The lesson is clear. We must apply it to the rest of the free world before it's too late. But the load is on the shoulders of the man in the street. Tell him what you've just told me."

Mr. Goodfriend had told the President, in effect, that we were losing the war for men's hearts and minds because of our failure to make real friends among other peoples. The struggle for men's minds cannot be won with atom bombs, he pointed out.

This book is a pictorial attempt to show the ordinary man why we must take the lead in the world and how we should do so—or perhaps how we should not do so. Mr. Goodfriend makes the points in a fine series of photographs that boasting about our skyscrapers does not endear us to people who think themselves lucky if they have a mud hut to live in and that reminders of how rich we are do not win the affections of the poor. Illustrations of our overwhelming power may make us feared. They do not make us loved.

Mr. Goodfriend deals at length with China, the scene of our most resounding failure in world policy. At least in part we failed because we did not explain in understandable terms the good things we were doing. The Communists worked with the simplest of tools, but they were implements the peasants knew how to use. We introduced complex machines, which needed a complex supply and maintenance system to keep them going. The Communists worked from the ground up. We worked from the rulers' level. They worked in the villages. We worked to a large extent in the cities. We appealed to the self-interest of the established powers. They gave hope to the hopeless. They proclaimed a faith to those who had nothing. The mistakes we made in our aid programs they mocked in words and pictures the masses could understand. The Communists had fanatical belief in their cause and missionary zeal.

Chester Bowles, now Ambassador to India, remarks in a foreword to this volume: "Communist propaganda constantly dins into the ears of the receptive millions false promises of peace, plenty, and freedom and calls on them to accept Soviet leadership in a revolutionary struggle against the Western democracies."

The American who carries the load must know what it means, and why he must assume this strange and unwelcome burden. If the average citizen had had a reasonable grounding in ancient history it would be easy to point to the parallel of Rome's work in establishing peace, order, and civilization in the Mediterranean lands. It is a sad sidelight on our educational failure that this approach is impractical. The reasons for the assumption by the United States of world power must be instilled into its citizens by the most elementary method of graphic display. This is what Mr. Goodfriend is trying to do.

James M. Minifie is a member of the Washington staff of the New York Herald Tribune.

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Democracy *can* win if it reveals to despairing people the choice: not between Communism and nylons but between slavery and liberty.

—*From "The Only War We Seek."*

Well-fed Western children, empty rice bowls, rickets, rags; American entertainment, Chinese films with strong Communist propaganda.

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Critique of a Delicate Field

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES. By Felix Morley. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 175 pp. $2.50.

By Frank Altschul

THIS slender volume by Felix Morley, bearing the somewhat overambitious title "The Foreign Policy of the United States," is in no sense a history of our foreign policy throughout the years, but rather a critique of some of its more recent manifestations. Cataloguing what he describes as "a whole series of colossal blunders," Mr. Morley submits his explanation of how we came to be led so far astray. He ascribes this in part to an unprecedented usurpation of power by the Executive and in part to our "bipartisan foreign policy," which he considers "directly responsible for all our major blunders in the foreign policy field."

That mistakes have been made I presume no responsible person would today deny. High office does not relieve men of that fallibility which is the universal lot. But it is proverbially easy to be wise after the event, and I have the feeling that Mr. Morley's book bears eloquent testimony to the truth of this old saying.

In the light of history, for example, it is not difficult to see that it was a mistake to have demobilized as we did in the enthusiastic aftermath of victory. But Mr. Morley has apparently forgotten the irresistible demand to get the boys home that swept the country at that time; and he has surely forgotten the extent to which this demand was fostered by those elements in the Congress which share his own political outlook.

Similarly, it is not difficult to see today that it was a mistake to sanction the crippling of the United Nations by according the veto to the permanent members of the Security Council. But Mr. Morley has apparently forgotten that without the inclusion of the veto the United Nations Charter would in all likelihood not have been acceptable to the United States Senate as it surely would not have been acceptable to those who share his beliefs.

And if it has become painfully evident that our China policy has been a failure it is by no means clear what other policy would have proved successful in view of the revolutionary forces which were sweeping the Asiatic continent, and China in particular. In any event, it is not easy to recall a promising alternative urged upon our Government at that time.

Mr. Morley asserts that "such a series of foreign policy blunders would have been far less likely if Congress had asserted its prerogative in this field, or even if there had been frank and open public discussion of issues as they arose." Few would disagree with Mr. Morley's contention that under our form of government the Congress should be advised as promptly as possible of any commitments which the Executive contemplates making or has made with other nations and that the reasons for policies proposed or adopted should be fully explained to the people. Only in so far as this is done can the President hope to command the support of a sympathetic legislature and an informed public opinion.

But Mr. Morley, who buttresses his argument with many apposite quotations from the Founding Fathers, does not seem to take adequately into account the extent to which the tempo of events has increased since the turn of the eighteenth century. Today decisions of vast importance must on occasion be reached with a speed unnecessary in earlier times. Interminable discussion is likely to produce delays which may more than outweigh any advantages to be gained from the discussion itself. Instances of this in the course of our attempt to thwart the Soviet challenge come readily to mind.

However, even assuming that circumstances permitted such a time-consuming process, it is by no means sure that we should have made fewer mistakes had every important Executive decision been submitted to the prior scrutiny of public debate. For in the delicate field of foreign policy this does not of necessity lead either to clarity or wisdom—a point illustrated admirably by Mr. Morley in the course of his exposition. We have only recently witnessed the thorough airing of the MacArthur affair. To what conclusion has this led such an intelligent observer of the passing scene as Mr. Morley? "It is indisputable," he says, "that General MacArthur was relieved of his command primarily because he wanted to win the war for the United States rather than for the U. N. as a whole." This will come as a surprise to those of us who have been led by the Senate hearings to the naive belief that General MacArthur was recalled primarily because in his natural desire to bring the Korean war to a successful conclusion he felt impelled to take risks which his superior officers, for cogent reasons, were unwilling to take.

Mr. Morley has produced a confused and a disappointing book.

Frank Altschul is president of General American Investors and a director of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

DUBIOUS DIETS

Fannie Gross, of Asheville, North Carolina, presents a quiz concerning famous literary characters who, judging from the food they partook of, could not possibly have had ulcers. Allowing ten points for correctly naming either the character or the story in each case, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 16.

1. Because he bought a supply of sauce to be eaten exclusively with meat but never bought any meat, the fate of his vanished mistress was quite obvious.
2. For more than a hundred years, this English nobleman included not less than six ounces of raw insides of fish in his daily diet.
3. He devoured a salad consisting of five pilgrims served on lettuce.
4. Poison did not faze her but the antidote killed her.
5. The other members of the crew having been disposed of, this hungry sailor boiled the cook in self-defense and feasted upon him for about a week.
6. This Gothic queen dined on a pie made of her two pulverized sons.
7. Trapped in a cave this half-breed ate bits of candles and whole bats except for their claws.
8. A meal consisting of six pomegranate seeds was meager fare following this young lady's long fast.
9. This insane man fed flies to spiders, spiders to birds, and then ate the birds including the feathers.
10. After this character had eaten a little coffee-colored fat boy, it was absolutely necessary for him to eat the boy's father too.

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History of a State

RUSSIA: Past and Present. By Anatole G. Mazour. New York: D. Van Nostrand Co. 785 pp. $9.

By Bertram D. Wolfe

EACH time a new history of Russia comes out those who work in the field of Soviet studies feel a stir of hope. Hope was higher than usual when I opened Professor Mazour's "Russia: Past and Present" for I had admired his excellent history of Russian historiography. Would this be the one-volume work we have all been waiting for, the work we might confidently recommend to students and questioners? After reading and pondering every word from the evocative poetic epigraphs to the disappointingly slipshod index it is my duty to report that Russian history classes will be tomorrow, as they were yesterday, without a suitable basic text.

Not that there are not some good things in this book—as indeed there are in all the available works from Vernadsky to Pares. The basic organization is good, a skilful compromise between treatment by topics and chronological treatment. The things that matter most to us—Russian literature, drama, music, the revolutionary movement, the history of the Russian state, the Russian church, social, economic, and agrarian history, ideological controversy — are allotted proper space and place in the whole. The confused events of March and April 1917, when the Czar's throne fell and a short-lived democratic government arose, are given the clearest and most coherent account that has so far appeared in any general history.

Unfortunately, the list of liabilities is much larger, and on the whole much more important, than the list of assets. First there is no clear framework of general ideas, while the general ideas advanced are most of them open to question. The drastic centralization of the Russian state is attributed to the size of the land, though any comparative historian would ask: why then has size been linked with decentralization in China and India? Russia's foreign policy is explained and justified in terms of her lack of warm-water ports, although this represents only a minor facet of the late history of a land power's secular expansion. The viewpoint of the countries whose warm-water ports Russia must allegedly covet is given no consideration.

The victims of internal expansion, the Uralo-Altaic peoples, we are informed on the evasive authority of an unnamed "American geographer," are of "low-grade stock." Incidentally, this technique of unexpected selective quotation to smuggle in viewpoints which the author wishes to hint at but not openly espouse runs throughout the book as one of its least pleasant characteristics. The population of the Volga German Republic, who survived more than one mortal struggle between "Teuton and Slav" from the days of Catherine to the days of Stalin, we are informed "had to be scattered throughout Siberia to avoid a Russian Sudeten Problem." The Poles, the Turks, and Russia's other neighbors are given no more historical understanding than Aesop's lamb that troubled the stream out of which the wolf was drinking. Events as diverse as the annexation of the Baltic republics and the reduction of Albania to the status of a satellite are subsumed under the "formation of a solid pro-Soviet Slavic bloc" and a "historic victory of Slav over Teuton," though none of these peoples is Slavic. In general, the right of a great power to become greater by continuous expansion is simply taken for granted.

This book sorely needs one more rewriting from start to finish in order to bring its approaches into harmony with each other in a single framework of historical generalization and moral evaluation. But pending that, those who want to get a sound historical background for understanding the overmastering problem of our day will still have to be referred to the prolix Pares or the admirably objective "Short History of Russia" by Sumner, which is so hard for the novice to read because, chronologically speaking, it was written backwards.

Bertram D. Wolfe is the author of "Three Who Made a Revolution" and other works on Russia.

Edmund A. Walsh, S.J.—"penetrating."

Expanding a Theory

TOTAL EMPIRE: The Roots and Progress of World Communism. By Edmund A. Walsh, S. J. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co. 293 pp. $3.50.

By Martin Ebon

FEW MEN in the United States have shown such a wide and consistent interest in the affairs of the world as has Edmund A. Walsh, regent of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and vice-president of the university. At Georgetown Father Walsh has been instrumental in the training of men who today represent the United States abroad.

As a consultant and diplomat Father Walsh has traveled extensively. One of his first missions was to the Soviet Union in 1922, when he was a director-general of the Papal Relief Commission, which fed 158,000 Russians per day. His work took him to Germany as an American consultant during the Nuremberg trial of Nazi war criminals and more recently to Japan.

This book is divided into two parts. The first is a personal record of experiences and impressions; the second an analysis of world Communism. The author's Leaves from a Russian Diary arrive at this conclusion about the American national character—"genius for the practical and concrete phenomena of life, coupled with a kind of tone deafness toward the role of the abstract and metaphysical in the unfolding of world history."

After briefly tracing the roles of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin the author outlines current Soviet aims and deals with what he calls "dialectical materialism in arms." These chapters provide valuable background, provided from the point of view of a close observer. In the second part of the book, entitled The Wasted Years, Father Walsh offers analyses of Soviet "geopolitics" that link up with his previous writings and are therefore particularly interesting.

Father Walsh believes that the geopoliticians of the Soviet Union may have adapted the famous thesis of Sir Halford Mackinder to read: "Who controls the rimlands of Europe and Asia can protect the Heartland of the World Revolution." He observes that, "should the Communist empire ever advance as far as the English Channel on one side of the world and eventually dominate the full coast line of

(*Continued on page 36*)

Martin Ebon is the author of "World Communism Today."

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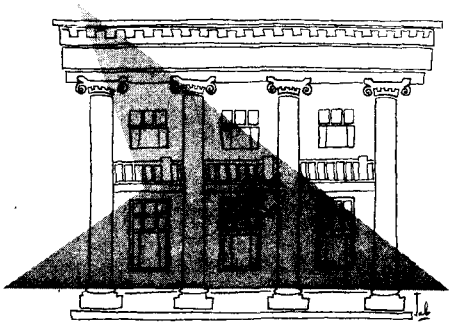
Art & Architecture.

If you come across these words before Christmas and are still seeking gift ideas you would do well to consider some of the volumes on art and architecture published this past season. René Huyghe's "Art Treasures of the Louvre," Jacques Dupont's "Seventeenth Century," Maurice Raynal's "Nineteenth Century," Daniel Catton Rich's "Degas," and the Venturis' "Italian Painting: The Renaissance" are big, handsome albums of full-color plates illuminated by discriminating text. But, as Walter Pach warns in reviewing the Venturi volume on page 13, the reproductions, however dazzling, are only approximations of the originals. An exceedingly attractive and informative introduction to recent developments in painting is Thomas B. Hess's "Abstract Painting," reviewed on page 14. Homemakers as well as aficionados of architecture will find Ernest Pickering's illustrated "The Homes of America" (page 14) a pleasant book to have at home.



A Millennial Phoenix

THE FRESCO CYCLE OF S. MARIA DI CASTELSEPRIO. By Kurt Weitzmann. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press. 101 pp. 32 pp. of plates. $10.

By Harry Bober

FOR the treasures of art irrevocably lost during the years of World War II there never, of course, can be any compensation. Yet, almost by way of consolation, those same years have occasioned the discovery of many exciting new works. Perhaps the most remarkable of the latter is the series of frescoes in the church of S. Maria di Castelseprio, north of Milan. Professor Weitzmann—whose authority in the realm of Byzantine art would exclude any possibility of capricious enthusiasm—pronounces these "unparalleled on Italian soil," and ranks them "with the greatest discoveries of our century, comparable in quality to the mosaics of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople." In 1944, when layers of concealing whitewash were stripped from the walls, the paintings were again revealed, just about a thousand years since they were first seen—a millennial phoenix.

Short of visiting the church itself, one must turn to the "official" publication, issued in Milan in 1948, for the most authentic suggestion of the character of the frescoes and their color. Three Italian scholars (Bognetti, Chierici, and Capitani D'Arzago) collaborated in that book in the hope of forming a definitive judgment on the historical place of the paintings. Their unanimous pronouncement was that the frescoes date from the seventh century; that the artists must have been foreigners, possibly of Syrian or Palestinian origin, since their craft is superior to comparable Italian paintings. For its reproductions the splendid tome must stand unequaled and unchallenged. But its main conclusions appear to be so unsatisfactory that Dr. Weitzmann has devoted his book to restudying them. He argues with convincing clarity, thoroughness, and exhaustive reexamination of all available evidence that the paintings of Castelseprio could only have been made in the second quarter of the tenth century by an artist who had come from Constantinople itself. His presentation of documentary, stylistic, iconographic, and historical factors makes these conclusions eminently possible and probable. While it would be too much to attempt to recapitulate the essential points of the controversy it must be said that the new arguments will withstand the most critical scrutiny. More than a mere refutation of the Italian publication, the new book adds an ingenious interpretation of the paintings whose theme is the Infancy of Christ. Underlying each scene and uniting the whole cycle the author discovers persistently reiterated allusions to the Dogma of the Incarnation. Its sophisticated and subtly coherent formulation in the fresco series, although remarkable, should not be too surprising to those who know the programs of Byzantine mosaic decoration in Hosios Lucas and Daphni. "Art was for them a vehicle by which a theological idea could be transformed with great precision into visual forms, thereby stimulating a religious experience as immediate as that derived from reading or hearing Holy Scripture."

The controversy over the dating of S. Maria di Castelseprio, which is the main issue, has an exasperatingly familiar ring. Just those major works of Byzantine painting which all agree to be very similar to the Castelseprio scenes—the Paris Psalter and the Joshua Roll—have themselves been the subject of inconclusive debate which places them alternatively in the seventh or tenth century. (The intervening centuries are ruled out because the iconoclastic controversy makes unlikely the creation or survival of major pictorial religious decoration.) But Professor Weitzmann has, in his other books, cogently argued a tenth-century date for those manuscripts, and his arguments find strong support among scholars. In his present book he offers a thorough analysis of the stylistic peculiarities of both manuscripts and frescoes, proceeding from the more abstract aspects of their formal structure and expression down to minute details of drapery folds and highlights. By negative argument he contrasts their style most effectively with the seventh-century works adduced by the Italian scholars as the artistic relatives of the new-found paintings. He leaves no fundamental issue unanswered and in his last chapter discusses the historical background of the period into which these works are now dated. The details of all the arguments may seem tiresome to the ordinary reader and the alternative solutions equally unimpressive. But the disinterested work of the research scholar in effect processes and prepares the material which, in the natural course of events, will benefit the "art consumer" in pleasant and lazy contemplation. For, once the scholars settle certain basic issues, the middlemen of the literature of art may then (without great hazard) enthuse in terms more readily comprehensible to the non-specialized reader. In this instance it means that if we accept Weitzmann's thesis there emerges a clear and fairly consistent picture of a splendid school of painters, miniaturists, and ivory carvers in tenth-century Byzantium.

Harry Bober is assistant professor of Fine Arts at Harvard University.

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Among the Old Masters

ITALIAN PAINTING: The Renaissance. Critical Studies by Lionello Venturi, Historical Surveys by Rosabianca Skira-Venturi. Translated by Stuart Gilbert. New York: Albert Skira. 168 *pp.* 105 *color plates.* $17.50.

By WALTER PACH

SINCE the publisher calls particular attention to a feat of color photography which gives to the present volume a place apart in the vast literature of its subject, and since the illustrations occupy so much space in this book, we may begin by considering the seventeen color plates devoted to Michelangelo's ceiling in the Sistine Chapel. They are without precedent; and a page of text is given to recording the difficulties of making the reproductions. It was from a vantage point that few persons have enjoyed since the time when the great artist's scaffolding was taken down. For color work done on the spot the problem was indeed an enormous one. Here are "close-ups" showing details of the actual painting, with one color superimposed on another by brush strokes that are clearly to be followed, with corrections of outline in heavier impasto, and other intimacies of the master's procedure invisible to the naked eye as it gazes upward to the titanic work.

However, it is not such aspects of it as much as a greater approach to accuracy in rendering the hues of Michelangelo's painting which constitutes the interest of this new achievement. After comparing the results with other color reproductions of the Sistine it may be said at once that a very notable advance has been made. Without any lack of gratitude for a truer documentation of the great tour de force at the Vatican, all of us who can call to memory the other paintings in this book and compare their image with these reproductions will realize once more the limitations of color printing. We are still at a far remove from the effect of originals—a warning that is in order at a time when people are apt to think that they are in direct contact with the masters by means of the modern color processes. These do yield advantages over the old black-and-white photographs which so much enlarged the possibilities of connoisseurship; nevertheless it is essential to keep in mind that we are not seeing the paintings themselves (above all in the case of the Sistine, where Michelangelo calculated so well the effect of his large-scale work, and the effect of its distance from the spectator). That last factor in producing the impression is abolished by the means used for these reproductions, so that the paintings as rendered in the present book somewhat approximate what was seen by the master himself.

Professor Venturi in his text accomplishes the difficult task of treating his often studied subject with a surprising number of new ideas, and yet with due respect for received judgment. The double lifetime devoted by his father and himself to the history and interpretation of Italian art bears new fruit in thought-provoking analyses of the character and influence of the great painters from Leonardo to Veronese. And now a third generation of the family adds fascinating details to her father's more general résumé of the glorious succession of the masters.

Walter Pach is author of "The Masters of Modern Art," "Modern Art in America," and "Vincent Van Gogh."

—*From "Italian Painting: The Renaissance."*

Details from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling—"intimacies of the master's procedure."

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—*From "The Homes of America."*

Santa Barbara home—"housebuilding at its most direct."

Past & Present in Shelters

THE HOMES OF AMERICA. By Ernest Pickering. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 284 *pp.* $5.75.

By Richard Pratt

BY A nice piece of pictorial juxtaposition in the front of his book, Professor Pickering lets the many multi-paned little windows of the roughly 1680 Benjamin Abbott farmstead at Andover, Massachusetts, peer across from one page to the next at the sheer glass walls and dead-flat cantilevered roof of a recent residence by Richard Neutra in Southern California. The author's comment in the caption is that "after three centuries the simplicity of the early American home is reappearing in the contemporary house." I don't see how he could have chosen two examples much better than these with which to make his point. For the straightforwardness of each one, and the lack in either one of any straining after stylishness, are outstanding traits of the best American housebuilding at its most direct and unadorned, both now and in the distant past. In terms of the occupants and conditions of its own time and place, each of the two houses in question is a clean-cut solution for providing the most appropriate shelter possible. Both were meant to be useful rather than ornamental, and I believe this also to be the case with Professor Pickering's book itself.

It is a sound, well designed, and functional book. It is the only book I know which tells the story of American houses right on through from the first real dwellings of the early English settlers to what is going on today. But it seems to me quite weak on contemporary houses, practically ignoring the ones of small to moderate size, among which I feel can be found the best American work of the present. And while it does not by any means ignore the houses that were done between the 1860's, say, and the 1930's, it tells tantalizingly little, considering this to have been a period of the most agitated tastes in the history of domestic architecture—even more agitated than the present. By the same token it misses out on the men behind the typical houses of those times, the really romantic designers like Alexander Jackson Davis and A. J. Downing.

The book contains more than two hundred illustrations, and while the photographs are for the most part documentary in tone, they do include many of houses not ordinarily included in works of this kind, which was a pleasant surprise to this particular reader.

Richard Pratt, associate editor of the Ladies' Home Journal, *is author of "A Treasury of Early American Homes."*

Avant-Garde Artists

ABSTRACT PAINTING: Background and American Phase. By Thomas B. Hess. New York: Viking Press. 164 *pp.* $7.50.

By Robert Goldwater

IN writing about abstract art the critic is squarely up against the essence of his craft. Lacking the exits of the obvious subject which warrants description, the explanation of hidden story meanings, and the obvious stylization of nature which needs justification in terms of the painter's intentions, the critic has his back against the wall. In this country he cannot fall back upon any such tradition of criticism as the language has developed for literature. Nor in our so little plastically-minded culture can the critic of painting expect from his readers the same familiarity of reference and comparison upon which the literary critic can rely.

For all of these reasons Thomas Hess is to be commended for tackling a book on abstract painting. He has gone at his task with an enthusiasm that reflects the dedicated role of the *avant-garde* artists of whom he writes. His style, sprinkled with metaphor and many an apt insight, suggests the liveliness of the group of painters in this country who have been caught in the limelight of controversy during the last ten years, and who, though they are occasionally annoying in their somewhat humorless assumption that they are the heirs to all the culture of the ages and its only present embodiment, are certainly at the moment (along with their counterparts in sculpture) the most vital group of artists to be found in the United States.

Mr. Hess has divided his book into three parts. The first presents the familiar argument that twentieth-century abstraction has respectability and a pedigree because all art, no matter how representational, contains elements of design and surface executed for their own sakes, and so is "abstract." The second discusses the development of abstraction in modern European art and in such "early" Americans as Stuart Davis. Beginning with the geometrical elements of Cézanne, it presents the post-impressionists, fauves, and cubists as the

Robert Goldwater, a member of the art department of Queens College, New York City, is editor of the Magazine of Art *and author of a study of Rufino Tamayo.*

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immediate semi-abstract predecessors. Then come the three broad directions of pure abstraction: geometric (Mondrian), expressionist (Kandinsky), and free-form (Miro). These are all given the respect due to monumental achievements of the past, and perhaps postwar European painting does justify the implication that in themselves they are no longer living forces.

All this is in a sense introductory to the final and largest section, Foreground and New York. Here general history gives way to separate essays on eighteen (the best known are De Kooning and Pollock) American abstract painters of the postwar years. Evidently Mr. Hess knows these men personally, and this gives a pleasant immediacy to his description of their work. Yet he has not failed to mention their previous history as representational painters (often hidden in the blinding light of the new revelation) nor hesitated to point out weaknesses where he feels them.

Too frequently in writing about art in this country objective, or supposedly objective, reporting passes for criticism. Mr. Hess's conviction of the interest and importance of these painters is a happy exception and of great value in introducing his artists to the lay public he is addressing. To sustain this tone Mr. Hess writes at high speed in a metaphoric language that often reveals his sensitivity to the emotional atmosphere as well as the structure of the works he describes. But it is not quite clear whether he is engaged in exposition, which calls for precision, or allowing himself the subjective license of the belles-lettrist, and too often when we think we are following an analytic account we find ourselves caught in the unclear metaphor of an incantatory language. The calling forth of mood is a legitimate critical device (more common in the French tradition of art writing than in our own), but it should not be confused with exposition, though some may prefer it to the latter. No one would ask Mr. Hess for that accuracy of detail which is required of those academic scholars upon whom he has largely relied (especially in his first sections) and whom the specialist will easily identify even if they are only occasionally mentioned. But it is disturbing to find the apparent requirement of an almost unrelenting excitement leading so frequently to overstatements that will lead the unwary astray. Yet other passages remind us that it was his verbal intention betraying his visual acumen which brings about these lapses. We could wish, too, for some summing up of

(*Continued on page 39*)

Fiction. *Has 1951 been a good year for fiction? In terms of quality just average. In terms of sales below average. It was a year notable for the bright promise it offered for the future. A number of fine native talents had their first hearing through books, including James Jones ("From Here to Eternity"), J. D. Salinger ("The Catcher in the Rye"), William Styron ("Lie Down in Darkness"), and Hortense Calisher ("In the Absence of Angels"). And Americans had a chance to meet some able writers from abroad: Sweden's Pär Lagerkvist ("Barabbas"), France's Jean-Louis Curtis ("The Forests of the Night") and Clément Richer ("Ti-Coyo and His Shark"), Italy's Elsa Morante ("The House of Liars"), and England's David Mathews ("The Mango on the Mango Tree"). At year's end comes another promising Italian newcomer, Romualdo Romano, whose "Scirocco" is reviewed below.*

In the Path of Desert Winds

SCIROCCO. By Romualdo Romano. Translated by William Jay Smith. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. 184 pp. $2.75.

By Robert Pick

THE recipient of the Ernest Hemingway Award in 1949, this young writer would attract one's attention even if this first novel of his had appeared without that honor attached to it. Not that his book is very different from the numerous earlier stories about village life in Sicily or Southern Italy under the Fascists. Dismal misery, primitive sex, injustice, filth, boredom, cynicism—those sordid traits, familiar by now as the prevailing background traits of the genre, are present in this book again. But very much like his confrère Vittorini ("In Sicily"), Signor Romano also manages to make a three-dimensional figure of his narrator and to show him in the process of maturing and winning a semblance of inner freedom. And then, this young author writes with a remarkable feeling for style, an economy of words, and a selectiveness in his imagery which heightens the intensity of his realistic observations to the extent of lending them a deeper meaning without the trumperies of a forced symbolism.

Signor Romano's book is an account of three days, some time toward the end of the war, in the life of a young schoolteacher, a stranger to the village, and a would-be novelist and poet. A great deal happens in those three days—or nothing; it depends on the way you look at it all (to the narrator himself, all of it seems just part of "existence" in the beginning): his landlady's nymphomaniac daughter forces him into lovemaking; a house burns down; the Party secretary, who doubles as Castagneto's doctor, tries to catch an underground agent red-handed; a young girl living in a dilapidated castle, with the connivance of her family, invites him to become her lover; a poor woman has an abortion; and one of the daughters of the one wealthy man in the place is dying of tuberculosis. And down upon that wild panorama of lust and squalor beats the scirocco, the hot, dry, dust-laden wind from the African coast. The manner in which this young storyteller at all times keeps the scirocco within his story is quite an accomplishment. There also is the description of a wild-fowl hunt in the narrative which must have delighted Mr. Hemingway and is likely to spellbind others.

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Unlike Other Tales

FANCIES AND GOODNIGHTS. By John Collier. New York: Doubleday & Co. 364 pp. $4.

By Basil Davenport

IF you have read any of John Collier's stories, then all I need to do is tell you that this contains fifty of them—the entire contents (one story excepted) of his out-of-print and eagerly sought-after collections, "Presenting Moonshine" and "The Touch of Nutmeg"; and in addition there are among the fifty (like the seventeen of Priam's fifty sons who were sons of Hecuba) seventeen stories never before published in book form. But if you haven't read any of John Collier, then the reviewer, after asking where in the world you have been living, finds himself in a difficulty. For these are, in the sage phrase of the jacket, "tales unlike other tales." And though they are so much akin that, reading any one of them in *The New Yorker* (if it appeared there), one could spot it as a Collier story long before turning over to the signature, it is hard to say what that quality is. It cannot be the eerie, although jinns, fiends, conversational gorillas, and Beelzebub himself figure prominently in many of the stories (and the eeriest of all, perhaps, is about the people who live all night in the big department stores). Some of the best of them, tales of murder revealed by an accident that was in the nature of things, or murders in the future, pointed out equally by the inexorable logic of the nature of things, have nothing haunted about them. It is not quite the macabre, though Mr. Collier can certainly get more fun than any living man out of a scene where a helpless young man is disemboweled before his own eyes (it *is* funny, and I *told* you John Collier was a hard man to convey); for there is nothing macabre in the straightforward spiritual brutality of the murder in "Wet Saturday."

The quality is to be found, perhaps, in Mr. Collier's elegant and somehow eighteenth-century view of man. Man, he perceives,

> Like an angry ape,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
> As make the angels weep,

and therefore it is quite natural that he should attract the attention of apes that can write books, of fiends like heavyweight wrestlers, and of fiends like macaronis, who tempt him for amusement. Man in Mr. Collier's world is quite capable of tempting himself, and there is good sport is seeing for what small things he will do it. Clara Middleton's father in "The Egoist" would have been incapable of selling her simply to a rich man; when he tried the wine Sir Willoughby kept in his cellars—! In the same way the father in "Cancel All I Said" would never sell his daughter to Hollywood simply for a fortune; but when he remembers the yellow waistcoat he once saw on Lord Lonsdale—! Only, when the angry ape makes the angels weep, Mr. Collier, with greater detachment than young Mr. Disraeli, is on the side neither of the apes nor the weeping angels; he is sitting in a sidebox, observing how really diverting are the fantastic tricks.

Once or twice tenderness nearly or quite breaks in, and most vividly in the most unrealistic stories. There is a really idyllic feeling about the love of the night-watchman and the youngest of the people who haunt the dark department stores. But in general Mr. Collier remains the master of an irony so perfectly balanced that his horror is hardly ever quite free of humor, nor his humor of horror.

—*Sol Libsohn.*

Benjamin Appel—"good documentary."

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Seeger, in "Two Bottles of Relish," by Lord Dunsany. 2. Fifth Earl of Gonister, in "After Many a Summer Dies the Swan," by Aldous Huxley. 3. Gargantua, in "Gargantua and Pantagruel," by François Rabelais. 4. Beatrice, in "Rappaccini's Daughter," by Nathaniel Hawthorne. 5. Captain in "The Yarn of the *Nancy Bell*," by W. S. Gilbert. 6. Tamora, in "Titus Andronicus," by William Shakespeare. 7. Injun Joe, in "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," by Mark Twain. 8. Persephone, in Greek mythology. 9. Renfield, in "Dracula," by Bram Stoker. 10. Sea-serpent, in "The Circus of Dr. Lao," by Charles G. Finney.

Guerrilla Warfare

FORTRESS IN THE RICE. By Benjamin Appel. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 425 pp. $3.50.

By Robert Lowry

WHEN Paul V. McNutt went to the Philippines as U. S. High Commissioner in 1945 he took along as his special assistant a lean, keen-eyed proletarian novelist to write the history of the mission. Benjamin Appel had never before set foot outside the United States, but in such novels as "The Dark Stain," "The Power-House," and "Brain Guy" he had shown a ready sympathy for the poor and downtrodden wherever he found them. He found them by the thousands in the Philippines, burning with anger at their country's black-market ("buy-and-sell") rich, its turncoat, pocket-lining politicians, and its land-hoarding *hacenderos*. Dipping into the diary in which he jotted down daily notes on his jeep trips into the Huk-held rice country north of Manila, where he talked to Hukbalahap leaders, and his conversations with high Philippine and American brass at Manila headquarters, Appel began to conceive a work of non-fiction that would explain to Americans back home the plight of the Philippine masses and the reason for their revolutionary ferment. But when he sat down to write his book Appel, "having been mainly a novelist," found himself writing a novel instead.

Oddly, "Fortress in the Rice" is not a story of the postwar Philippines that Appel knew, but a story of the Philippines at war. And it is more successful as an expression of his original non-fiction intentions than it is as a novel.

Hero Dave MacVey is a stock young, wide-eyed man-of-good-will who voyages to Manila in 1941 to take a job in a bank and abruptly finds himself a prisoner of a war he hadn't bargained for. Commissioned a lieutenant with the USAFFE, the American-led guerrillas who carried on in the back-country during the Japanese occupation, Dave hurdles an obstacle course of his own Western prejudices on his raids with the Huks (who were not Red-led at the time, Mr. Appel explains in a faintly apologetic postscript to his novel, but included "not only Communists but Socialists, Nacionalistas, and non-politicals") and emerges at war's end, wounded but alive, with a profound sympathy for the hard-pressed revolutionaries he got to know and a profound distaste

(*Continued on page* 36)

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Personal History. *With the death of Harold W. Ross, founder and editor of* The New Yorker, *American journalism and literature lost one of its rarest talents.* SRL*'s feelings about Mr. Ross will be found on the editorial page of this issue. Shortly before his passing Dale Kramer, a free-lance writer, published a volume recounting the history and legend of "Ross and* The New Yorker." *George Y. Wells examines the book and its subject on page 18. Another legendary American who revolutionized American business and to an astonishing extent American society is the topic of "We Never Called Him Henry," reviewed immediately below. Its author, Harry Bennett, was Ford's right-hand man for three decades and himself became nearly as much of a legend as his boss. . . . Erskine Caldwell, whose novels have reached one of the largest audiences of modern times, thanks to the paper-backed reprint editions, tells of his years as a writer in "Call It Experience" (page 19).*

Thirty Years with a Tycoon

WE NEVER CALLED HIM HENRY. By Harry Bennett as told to Paul Marcus. New York: Gold Medal Books. 180 *pp.* 25c.

By W. C. Richards

A DETROIT editor in need some years back of a picture of Harry Herbert Bennett and not finding one suitable ordered his photographers to get him at once.

"We'll wake up some morning," he said, "to find this fellow murdered or president of the Ford Motor Company."

Head of Mr. Ford's plant police, his closest confidant for no inconsiderable time, and a man untroubled by gnawing dreams over whether Mr. Ford's wants were good or bad in the commonly accepted sense, Mr. Bennett did become a director of the company briefly. He was not killed because shots fired at him missed, and other persons who would have liked to rough him up thought best not to try.

In "We Never Called Him Henry" he tells the story of his thirty years as jack-of-all-trades and says to his critics: "It has been made to appear that Mr. Ford was a simple man misled by my bad advice. No simple man could have achieved what he did. I stayed as long as I did because I always did what he wanted."

To those who have called Bennett "gangster" and "thug" and "pro-Nazi" and "anti-Semite" he answers "lies." This rebuttal offered, he recites his career as Ford's ears and eyes from their first meeting in 1916 when Sailor Bennett was fresh off the U.S.S. *Nashville,* until the senior Ford's final breakdown.

Ford, he says, made gifts and withdrew them later if the recipients displeased him, tried to reunite families whether they wanted reunion or not, and would repaint or redecorate a favorite's house or even build him a new one, but it had to be done according to Ford's preferences. In critical situations his attitude was, "Let's you and him have a fight, Harry." He would not stand derision, figured he was getting divine guidance, hated anyone who criticized the car, had a morbid interest in crime and criminals, and always figured behind any man's downfall was a woman. He insisted he was not a capitalist, decided a person could live as long as he wished on cracked wheat, was anti-Catholic as well as anti-Jewish, thought unions were Jewish plots to ruin him but assured Thomas Edison he had no racial bias, really, but "the rotten newspapers make me look that way."

He suspected the DuPonts, reporters, and accountants, was anti-English (Bennett thinks it was because Winston Churchill poked fun at Ford's theory that most English problems could be solved if farming was intensified so the English could produce their own produce) and pro-German because Germans were clean, thrifty, hard working, and technologically advanced. He convinced himself that reports of Nazi brutality were propaganda and that Hitler would drop anchor as soon as he got the Polish corridor. "Well, by God, we're through with him," Ford is quoted as saying when Hitler's expansion continued. "He's power-drunk like the rest."

The book is an unusual coin to drop in the farebox for the ride Mr. Bennett had on Mr. Ford's shoulders. But the reader's puzzle when he puts it down is how the Tin Lizzie came to be amid such reputed maneuverings, biases, deviousness, cops and robbers, and feuds. Along the line there was the grand vision and brilliant inventiveness and expert calling of shots in addition to the muscling, the animosities, and the hocus-pocus. If there hadn't been, Lizzie never would have queened it as long as she did.

—*Acme.*

Henry Ford, Harry Ferguson, and Ford-Ferguson tractor model "the grand vision."

W. C. Richards, a Detroit newspaperman, is the author of "The Last Billionaire," an informal biography of Henry Ford.

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—*Don Rice*-New York Herald Tribune.

Harold Ross—"the mark of greatness on him."

Inseparable Phenomena

ROSS AND THE NEW YORKER. *By Dale Kramer. New York: Doubleday & Co. 297 pp. $3.75.*

By GEORGE Y. WELLS

WE WERE intrigued, as we often have been intrigued by *The New Yorker* itself, at the fact that a book has been written about the magazine and its late editor, Harold Ross. So with Dale Kramer's guidebook "Ross and *The New Yorker*," in hand we set out on an exploration of the weekly which is justly distinguished for its urbane comment, wit, humor, satire, reporting, and its fine short stories. By way of introduction, Kramer told us a good case could be argued that Harold Wallace Ross was a literary hoax, that no one who looked and acted like him could possibly be editor of America's smartest magazine.

This is another way of saying that a great body of folklore sprang up around Ross and *The New Yorker* during his lifetime. Kramer, whose book was published before Ross died two weeks ago, recalled enough of the legend for us to suggest that *The New Yorker* was the happy accident of an assortment of psychoneurotics operating in their booby hatch. Our guide regaled us with such tales as the dummy Ross is supposed to have kept in his office; of the drawers full of pills he kept on hand for ills, real or imagined; of his talking jags—"I don't want you to think I'm not incoherent," he was said to have told Robert Benchley—; of the rising and falling partitions, jangling telephones and buzzer systems, and other turmoil which Ross, according to Kramer, deemed the atmosphere essential to the production of a good magazine.

It is true that Ross exhausted (or was exasperated by) a string of "Jesuses," the irreverent office term for the miracle men he expected his managing editors to be. He drove a number of contributors and staff writers to distraction with his querulous queries on their products from the manuscript to the proof stage. Production men, so Kramer told us, sometimes were in tears when Ross on deadline ripped up the magazine and started over. By way of protest against Ross's idiosyncracies James Thurber, according to Ross, tore a telephone booth off the wall and stretched it out horizontally so he could play dead in it.

None of this satisfactorily explained Ross to us. Born in Aspen, Colorado, and reared in Salt Lake City, Utah, he was a man with little formal education but a broad one. He broke into newspaper work on the *Salt Lake Tribune,* thereafter caught the occupational fever of the profession at that time, and boomed about the South, the fringes of Manhattan, and Central America. He was in San Francisco, working on the *Call Bulletin,* when the United States entered the First World War. Ross joined up as an engineer. His career as a soldier was not distinguished until he maneuvered himself into editorship of the first *Stars and Stripes*—by methods, Kramer would have us believe, which stopped just short of meriting court martial.

After the war Ross came to New York and conned, as he liked to put it, the Butterick Publishing Company into siring a civilian offspring of *Stars and Stripes* called *Home Sector.* This was short-lived (as was a similar experiment based on *Yank* after the Second World War), and Ross next found himself in the editorship of the newborn American Legion's magazine. He never was comfortable in this spot. About the same time he moved into the Algonquin's Round Table set and, between breaking bread, trading quips and jibes, and playing poker with FPA, Alexander Woollcott, Heywood Broun, Dorothy Parker, Edna Ferber, Robert Benchley, Marc Connelly, and other Round-Tablers, Ross talked incessantly of starting a new magazine, essentially humor and reporting, of, by, and about New York. (To his dying day Ross dreaded the possibility of *The New Yorker*'s becoming a national magazine, a fear born out of the fact that today two-thirds of its circulation is outside the metropolis.) After a stint as co-editor of the then dying *Judge*

George Y. Wells, a member of the Sunday department of The New York Times, *was formerly press editor of* Newsweek.

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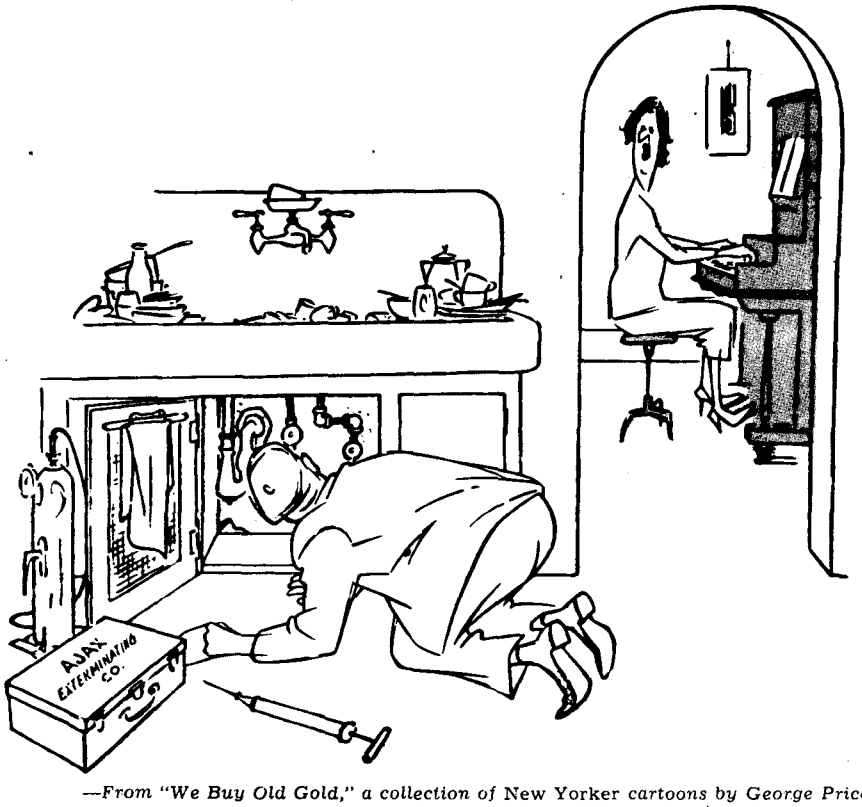
Ross was even more convinced of the soundness of his idea. In 1924 he persuaded Raoul Fleischmann to put up enough capital to launch *The New Yorker*. (All told, Fleischmann furnished $550,000 of the $710,000 needed to keep the magazine afloat in its critical early years.)

From then until his death Ross and *The New Yorker* were inseparable phenomena. As Kramer pointed out the magazine experienced its first really prosperous years in, of all times, the Depression period, when mortality was high in the magazine world. It was a tribute to the native sagacity of Ross. The fresh eye, the insatiable curiosity, the perennial sense of wonderment he found in the big city were never dimmed. Over the years he accumulated about him such craftsmen, such artists, as Rea Irvin, Katherine and E. B. White, Thurber, Wolcott Gibbs, Benchley, Helen E. Hokinson, Sam Cobean, A. J. Liebling, and others. These were among the names Kramer paraded to us, but he omitted entirely or cited scantily such key figures as William Shawn, G. A. Lobrano, James Geraghty, John McNulty, Ted Cooke, Mary Petty, Sanderson Vanderbilt, and Edmund Wilson, to name a few.

Kramer gave the impression at times that those around Ross made *The New Yorker* more in spite of him than because of him. It is this which sent us away from the tour with a sense of disappointment. For all his eccentricities, alleged or actual, Ross had the mark of greatness on him. Much of the folklore surrounding him and *The New Yorker* grew as much by the laissez faire attitude of its staff men as for any other reason; even the weirdest tales emanating from the magazine's editorial room were rarely exploded; in some instances they may have been embellished if for no other reason than to watch how they would grow. Ross himself was a man so absorbed with the perfection of his product that he was indifferent to almost everything else about his personal life. He shied away from publicity, or, as in the notable instance of his protest against the encroachment of the Bronx on his Stamford acres, his shyness and sensitiveness goaded him into ridiculous exhibitions.

Of such trivia much has been made. But it fails, as Kramer has failed, to give us the rounded portrait of Ross. Like all editorial geniuses, he was not so sure of what he wanted, but he was most certain of what he did not want. It is this as much as anything that enabled him to leave *The New Yorker* staff with a rich tradition, a high sense of values, an obsession for the perfect product, a restless drive to stay not only ahead of, but well above the pack. Whoever succeeds him cannot fail with *The New Yorker* if he remembers these Rossian principles and does one other thing Ross never failed to do: draw a bead on the business office the first time it tries to stick its neck into the editorial room.



—*From "We Buy Old Gold," a collection of* New Yorker *cartoons by George Price.*

"All's quiet, isn't it? Now watch what happens when I play 'Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy' from 'The Nutcracker Suite'!"

Literary Pep-talk

CALL IT EXPERIENCE. By Erskine Caldwell. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 239 *pp.* $3.50.

By Charles Lee

IMAGINE Erskine Caldwell sitting around a writers' workshop table, reminiscing, advising, answering questions, and posing others, and you have something of the special character of this book.

It is partly autobiographical, partly hortatory, partly instructive. At times it sounds like a literary pep-talk; at other times its burden will all but crush the youthful aspirant. Caldwell mentions six years of effort that produced less than a hundred dollars.

There's a gossipy quality to the restless ranging of the book. Strange characters like the mysterious Marianna wander in and out of Caldwell's recall; Alexander Woollcott makes an obese and obnoxious appearance; Hollywood, Moscow, and Maine are but three of a score of settings; and, as if to pull things together, the author adds an excellent epilogue in which he answers directly a couple of dozen questions relating to his craft. Caldwell's little acre is peculiarly farmed.

However, slapdash though the book may seem in regard to organization, it is all interesting, and much of it of vital value to the young writer. It is a literary picaresque. Caldwell's "seedtime" took him through an amazing procession of jobs, only partly touched on in this book: a hand in a cottonseed oil mill, a typesetter, a stonemason's helper, a milkman in Washington, a department store clerk in Scranton, a sodajerk in Philadelphia, a journalist in Atlanta. He drove through the gully-grooved, rotted-shack areas of his own part of Georgia with a country doctor, a tax assessor, and his own minister father. He saw life in the raw, lived it, felt it, and finally was moved to put it to paper in scores of short stories and in such celebrated books as "God's Little Acre" and "Tobacco Road."

Caldwell's basic requirements for the writer are the following: he must delight in his work as another delights in baseball, he must have faith in his talent, he must have endurance of the kind that will stick at the chore through mounds of rejection slips, he must value "content" above style, and he must place the work above reward. And when he becomes successful he will probably have to develop a thick hide against the debilitating effects of prosperity and an even thicker one against the destructive stupidities of unappreciative reviewers!

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An Open Letter to Montaigne

Humanist in the Personal Vein

ANTONIO IGLESIAS

—*Illustrations from the Bettmann Archive.*

Montaigne—"living, earthy, salty wisdom."

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This is the first of an occasional series of "Open Literary Letters" by Antonio Iglesias, SRL contributor and author of "Culture's Emergent Pathway."*

SIR: I must write this open letter to acknowledge publicly the admiration and gratitude I personally owe to you for having given me an appreciation of at least three magnificent gifts of the essayist: a literary and multiform vehicle of expression, your exemplary attitude and behavior as an utterly fearless and honest writer, and an effective method for studying myself as well as my fellowmen.

In my day some literary critics and historians have pointed out that you were one of the very few great writers in our Western culture who invented a literary genre, inasmuch as the essay as you wrote it had no direct forerunner either in classical Greco-Roman or in European literature. They explain that you invented the very word "*essai*" by giving it a specific literary meaning implying a trying out, a tentative approach to any subject of human interest, an assaying of its nature and value. They go on to say that, in inventing and writing your essays, you probably had little suspicion of the far-reaching importance of what you were creating; but that in your own wise heart you must have been aware of the fact that you were devising a new way of communicating yourself—as a distinct type of human being—to your fellowmen.

You must have seen with delight from eternity that as soon as you gave your literary invention to the world the essay began its protean evolution, proliferating into a great variety of personal expressions. You yourself wrote essays that moved away from the strictly autobiographical towards the impersonal and the universal, from the purely subjective to the objectivity of history and social philosophy. Do you recall, as fine examples of this class, those two masterpieces of your wisdom, "Of Friendship" and "Of the Education of Children"? And your followers, obeying for themselves and in themselves your cardinal principle of the personal approach, wrote essays that were always personal in essence but not necessarily autobiographical, intimate, or familiar. For it is precisely because the essay is personal that it unavoidably varies with the personality of each essayist.

In England, for example, Sir Francis Bacon wrote fairly short, extremely compact, epigrammatic essays which are gems of sententious worldly wisdom and of shrewd practical advice to ambitious men wanting, like himself, to get on in this world. Bacon gladly borrowed your generic noun and, seventeen years after the first edition of yours, began the publication of his famous "Essayes." But he never was as truly a personal essayist as you were. He was too rigid a scholar, too much the orator, too devoid of humor, too stern and too proud and too British, ever to acquire your ease and grace—or your amazing sincerity.

Prominently standing among the finest and closest of your English followers, Charles Lamb even went you one better in the writing of extremely personal, intimate, familiar, autobiographical, gossipy, and humorous essays. More than yourself, Lamb had no desire whatever to reform anything, had no practical advice to give to anyone, and no moral lesson to preach. And, unlike yourself, he had nothing but praise for God's creation: "I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country, the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived; I and my friends; to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer."

Lamb's great contemporary essayist, William Hazlitt, was an altogether different man and writer. With the trained eyes of a painter, the logical and comprehensive mind of a philosopher, a fine artistic taste, and the intuitive insights of a poet, Hazlitt was one of the finest literary critics in the English language. No man did more than he in calling the attention of his readers to what was true and beautiful, and in communicating to them a zest for good writing. But, being the genuine essayist that he was, no man was more subjective than he, and so the essence of his commentary, whatever his theme might be at the moment, was always derived from himself.

William Hazlitt, that brilliant and worthy follower of yours, rightly remarked: "Montaigne may be said to be the first man who had the courage to say as an author what he felt as a man." An acute and just observation that flings me straight into your famous and loudly-proclaimed egotism. That you were a gentleman unafraid is unquestionable. But can we say with equal assurance that you were as genuinely egotistical as you were brave? Your own testimony on the subject seems to be beyond doubt.

In the very preface to your first book of essays you frankly warn the general reader that they were not written for him but so that your relatives and friends might remember you more vividly after you were dead. "For it is myself that I portray," you explain. "Thus, reader, I am myself the substance of my book: there is no reason you should take up your time with so frivolous and so vain a subject." And there is, to be sure, much evidence of your egotism throughout the "Essays." Here is a sample:

> For many years now, my thoughts have dwelt only on myself. The world looks out and across: I turn my gaze within. I am always meditating on myself, trying and considering. Others, if they stop to think of it, will find that they send their mind abroad; it moves on ahead. As for me, I am forever revolving in myself.

Anyone reading this, or similar statements of yours, might hastily conclude that you were nothing but a narcissistic

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fool and an insufferable prig, devoted only to your own self-perfection, without a single thought for the welfare and well-being of anybody else. But even a cursory reading of your essays would show him the lamentable error of his hasty conclusion. Because you yourself have also made it abundantly clear that "I do not love myself so immoderately that I cannot view myself with detachment, as I view a neighbor or a tree." As a matter of fact, you were detached enough from yourself to view your life as part and parcel of the broad stream of human existence. You pointed out too that you communicate yourself to your readers by those common qualities that you shared with all men while you were alive, by the universal humanity of your being. Did you not say repeatedly that history was your favorite study because you found therein the most complete picture of "man in general, whom it is my object to know"?

As I see it balanced in the consecutive reading of your essays, the truth is that you really were one of the wisest and most genuine *humanists* of the Renaissance. That you constantly studied yourself is beyond doubt. What is not so obvious is that you did so with incredible disinterestedness, with a serenity and philosophical detachment that enabled you not only to know yourself thoroughly in the grand totality of your contradictory humanity, but at the same time to acquire a profound knowledge of your fellowmen in the past, the present, and the future. Paradoxically, the deeper you carried your research into your own human complexities the farther you entered into the inner selves of the rest of us. And by the same token, the constant and attentive seeing of other human beings as so many mirrors of yourself greatly enlarged and objectified your self-knowledge.

You were fully aware of these complementary paradoxes when you wrote that "I describe others in reporting one single ill-made individual." Because, as you knew so well, paradoxical man can truly know himself only by undertaking the arduous and hazardous task of moving forward and backward at the same time. For in this formidable undertaking, man is like that hypothetical well-digger who digs deeper and deeper into the bowels of the earth, reaches its very center and goes on digging beyond it, and then goes on digging deeper and deeper until he finally comes out of his very deep well in the antipodes, on the other side of the terrestrial globe.

As for your literary style—convinced as I am that the style is the man himself and believing that in your case it would be more so—I went to the "Essays" to see what you have to say on the subject and, frankly, I was sorely disappointed. For either you could not see yourself at all as reflected in the magic mirror of your writing, or you were a very bad literary critic of your own works. At any rate, here are some of your remarks on your own style:

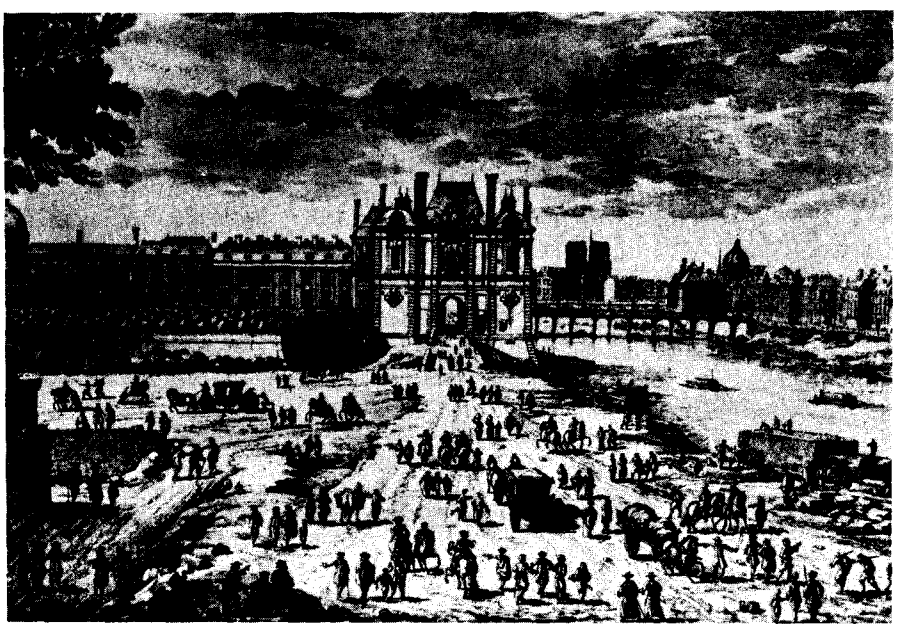
> . . . if I may call that a style which is a formless ungoverned speech, a popular jargon. I speak on paper as I do to the first person I meet. . . . I wander with indiscrimination and riot. My style and my mind are vagabonds together. . . . And what are the essays I scribble if not grotesque and far-fetched creatures lacking, save by chance, all order, continuity, and proportion? . . . When I hear anyone dwell on the language of my essays I would rather he held his peace. He is not so much exalting the style as belittling the sense. . . . Good God, how I would hate to be thought a pretty fellow with my pen, but an ass at everything else!

Well, my Lord of Montaigne, not a few observant and discerning critics have not held their peace but, dwelling on the language of your essays and exalting your style without belittling their sense, have thought of you as a very pretty fellow with the pen. Among your distinguished countrymen, Charles de Secondat Baron de Montesquieu went so far in praising you as to exclaim: "The four great poets, Plato, Malebranche, Shaftesbury, Montaigne." Another outstanding countryman of yours, famous for his superb literary criticisms, Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, noted that in its constitution and continuity your prose style shows you to have been a writer "very rich in animated, bold similes, naturally fertile in metaphors that are never detached from the thought but that seize it in its very center, in its interior, that join and bind it." Your "concise, vigorous, and always forcible style," added Sainte-Beuve, "by its poignancy, emphasizes and repeats the meaning. It may be said of his style that it is a continual epigram, or an ever-renewed metaphor, a style that has only been successfully employed by the French once, by Montaigne himself."

And in the New World that interested you so much, in my America, one of the noblest and wisest of your followers, Ralph Waldo Emerson, wrote of you:

> There have been men with deeper insight, but, one would say, never a man with such abundance of thoughts; he is never dull, never insincere, and has the genius to make the reader care for all he cares for. The sincerity and marrow of the man reaches to his sentences. I know not anywhere the book that seems less written. It is the language of conversation transferred to a book. One has the same pleasure in it that we have in listening to the necessary speech of men about their work, when any unusual circumstance gives momentary importance to the dialogue. For blacksmiths and teamsters do not trip in their speech; it is a shower of bullets. Cut Montaigne's words, and they would bleed; they are vascular and alive.

Sainte-Beuve also called you the wisest Frenchman that ever lived. As far as I can judge, of all the French writers whose books I have read, you certainly are the wisest, in the human, humane, and humanistic sense. And so for many years I have, from time to time, tried to suck as much as possible of your substance from those vascular and alive words of yours. For which living, earthy, and salty wisdom I thank you with all my heart.



Paris in the sixteenth-century period of Montaigne—"very pretty fellow with the pen."

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JAMES THRALL SOBY

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Ross of The New Yorker

THERE have been other editors whose names have been inseparable from their achievements in journalism — but not many. *The New Yorker* has won its niche in American literary history and carried its editor with it into that hall of fame which so seldom has place for self-effacing men who live for their work and ask little for themselves except an ideal achieved. We can give ungrudging admiration to an editor whose ambition was not to write himself, but to invent and perfect an opportunity for men and women who wished and who could write and draw in a fresh way — and then see that they did it, and were recognized and rewarded. It was Ross who took the ball from sarcasm, satire, and horseplay, gave it to humorous irony on the sidelines, and let irony make a forward pass for a touchdown. It was Ross who introduced to us, for example, E. B. White, who has restored that great English literary form, the personal essay, to popularity and power. It was Ross, no artist himself, whose atelier spread influence like the work rooms of the Italian painters in such diverse directions as commercial art, and the venerable *Punch* that once ruled humor as Britain ruled the sea. And Ross's work was not done as God created man in his own image, but by high standards of hard work for the creative labors of others. It was clearly Ross, inarticulate himself in images which communicate imagination, who sweated out perfection for others. He gave that kind of quality to *The New Yorker* which is a value in itself — the one touch more, the one word less, the blur erased, the idea clarified. He was like the whip man who lashed the slaves who built the pyramids. But some of his slaves were geniuses in humor, and all of them liked the job.

—H. S. C.

Report on a Generation

THE generation of adult Americans who can still be called young have had a singularly joyless and unimaginative childhood. They were bewildered by the anxieties of their elders through the Depression and in their adult lives by the war and the years of uneasy peace that followed. Most of them were trained in schools in which their minds and behavior were conditioned by the theories of progressive education, which seems to have been primarily intended to subject them to group discipline so that they might painlessly adapt themselves to what was considered to be a normal code of behavior. The writers who are worried about these products of modern education and the novelists who are now engaged in surveying them have reached dismal conclusions.

Two years ago Clifton Fadiman pointed out in an admirable essay, "The Decline of Attention," that the school as an instrument of our society cannot at the same time be an agent of intellectual revolution "if the society of which it is a part indoctrinates the child hourly with the virtues of attentiveness to things, techniques, machines, spectator sports, as opposed to knowledge, wisdom, and the works of the creative imagination." Every teacher in college knows that an immense amount of time is lost in trying to instruct students in the basic skills that should have been driven into their heads in high school along with the mental discipline that was dispensed with earlier in the attempt to keep the children always interested in the school work.

As a result there are countless college graduates who cannot, or will not, read the great books of the past, who can barely speak acceptable English, write a coherent letter, betray any intellectual curiosity about the political movements that are sweeping the world, or study the means by which their own country is losing or attempting to maintain the liberties with which it was once endowed.

The novelists are having a difficult time with grown-up sons and daughters of F. Scott Fitzgerald's madcap generation. It is extremely difficult to make them either likable or interesting. John Dos Passos has recently attempted in "Chosen Country" to tell the stories of a half dozen sober modern young people around Chicago against the background of the adventures of their progenitors. Compared to their fathers and grandfathers they appear to be well-meaning but colorless in their efforts to find themselves jobs and start their careers and families. In his first novel, "An Unfound Door," Al Hine fails to give any vitality to a group of permanent adolescents in Pittsburgh's country-club set. A divorced husband discovers that there must be some kind of education he has missed: "An education about how to get interested in things."

Both *Life* and *Fortune* magazines through social studies and reports by their correspondents have determined that young people have a profound urge to conform to the mores of the groups to which its individuals are attached. A Texas college professor described them as "a generation without responses—apathetic, laconic, no great loves, no profound hates, and pitifully few enthusiasms." Another teacher said that they were "unimaginative but very realistic. Security is their major concern. They are willing homemakers and quickly fall into monogamy." *Fortune* has been hammering at the wives of young executives who must always be on the alert not to betray any interest in intellectual matters and ready to hide their copies of *The Atlantic Monthly* or *Harper's* when the other girls come to call. One of their major worries is how to get rid of old friends when their husbands get better jobs. A satirist or philosopher might make something of these people, but they are impossible for the average novelist, unless he deals with a deviationist from the normal, as J. D. Salinger in "The Catcher in the Rye" revealed the tragedy of a confused adolescent who runs away from his fourth school hoping to find some adult who does not seem to him to be phoney.

IT IS time that someone came to the defense of this particular generation by proving that if they are not useful to the novelist they are invaluable to the American social and economic system

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at the present time and perhaps for years to come. We have an urgent need for them; for young women who keep house and bring up their children and who if necessary will work in our defense plants; for young men whose desire for security will anchor them to the professions and the skills they have acquired and to the innumerable jobs that will have to be done. If they lack attention and ability to become interested in all the aspects of a rounded education they have at least centered their full attention on themselves and on what was wholly vital to them at the time, the discovery of an occupation for which they are suited and a company which would employ them and give them a chance for advancement. If they believe in security as their major goal and fail to be concerned with principles and ideas they also believe, according to *Life*, in democracy and the brotherhood of man. For the time being that is enough. Who can certify what they will be like twenty years hence, or whether their children will not revolt against the limited horizons of their fathers and mothers and thus bring us full circle again.

—H. S.

Work in Progress

READERS may be able to assist the following, who are looking for material pertaining to their areas of investigation:

BRUCE McCLELLAN, of Deerfield, Mass., is collecting information for a biography of Parson Jonathan Ashley, who was born in Westfield, November 11, 1712, attended Yale College, and was pastor of the Deerfield Church from November 8, 1732, until his death in 1780. . . . Victor Rosen, 405 West 23, New York 11, for a biography of Otto H. Kahn would like to inspect, study, or borrow letters, diaries, documents pertaining to Mr. Kahn and his activities in the fields of banking, music, theatre, literature, and art, as well as pictures of him and his family.

Herbert Gambrell, Southern Methodist University, Dallas 5, is studying non-residence degree-granting institutions, 1900-1950. He seeks catalogs of these and any other such colleges: Central University (Indianapolis), Golden State (not Gate) University (California), Midland University (Chicago), Milton University (Baltimore), University of Sulgrave (England), Oriental University (Washington, D. C.). . . The Book Club of California is planning to publish a collection of the letters of Frank Norris, author of "The Octopus" and other novels. Readers owning such letters, or having knowledge of their whereabouts, should communicate with Edith M. Coulter, chairman of the publication committee of the club, 549 Market St., San Francisco 5.

In the preparation of a biography, Dr. Harry A. Wilmer, 1010 Noel Drive, Menlo Park, Calif., would like letters, stories, anecdotes, or reminiscences about Dr. Richard Everingham Scammon, professor of anatomy at the University of Minnesota from 1914 until his recent retirement. . . . Macmillan & Co., Ltd., St. Martin's Street, London, W.C.2, England, seeks letters from the late James Stephens for possible use in a memoir. Envelopes should be marked J. S. . . . Bernard Cherrick, Hotel Berkshire, 21 East 52, New York, would like letters and other material for a biography of Israel Zangwill, Anglo-Jewish man of letters and leader in Jewish life.

Thomas W. McMaster, 318 Maple Ave., Drexel Hill, Penna., makes an appeal for postal cards and stereoptican views, vintage 1876, to be used in a study of sectional history, particularly in connection with Pennsylvania Week and American Independence celebrations. . . . John Atkins, P. O. Box 432, Omdurman, Sudan, seeks letters and other documents for a critical and biographical study of Ernest Hemingway. . . . Martin Rywell, Harriman, Tenn., is collecting material for a biography of Samuel Colt, firearm inventor.

A Dickens Inscription

EARLIER this year the Columbia University Library received several hundred books as a bequest of the late Miss Hilda Ward, of New York City, daughter of Admiral Aaron Ward and granddaughter of the poet and composer Richard Storrs Willis. As the books were being removed from the shipping cases, someone noticed an old copy of Charles Dickens's "A Christmas Carol." Could it perhaps be one of the rare first editions? It turned out on closer examination to be considerably more: a volume with a long inscription to "Frank Powell" by Dickens himself.

Columbia's researchers have tried in vain to identify Frank Powell. Other than the obvious fact that he was a child there is no clue. Any theories regarding the identity of Frank Powell will be welcomed by Mr. Langdon Sully, Columbia University Library, New York 27, N. Y.

The inscription, a charming bit of unpublished Dickensiana, reads:

I wish I had given this book to Frank Powell; but I didn't, and couldn't now, could I, you know Frank, when I was not acquainted with you? Don't you see, if you had come to my house, and had knocked at my door, and had said to my servant, "Is Mr. Dickens at home?" my servant would have said "What name Sir?" Then you would have said, "Powell." Then he would have said "Powell of Peckham Sir?" Then you would have said, "The same." Then he would have said, "Walk in Sir." When you came in, I should have shown you an eagle (a real Eagle, you know, no nonsense or make believe), a raven, and a very small white dog; curling all over; and barking, as the vulgar expression is, like Bricks, and when you asked me to write my name in this book, I should have taken up a pen and done it so—

But don't you flourish [your signature] when you grow up, because it is a bad habit, and doesn't leave room for the day of the month: which is the Thirteenth of March 1844.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

For More "Platitudes"

SIR: Harold L. Hitchens's letter in [*SRL* Dec. 1], taking you apart on several of *The Saturday Review's* "policies," was annoying and full of fallacies. He speaks angrily of your "exaggerated concern for peoples" . . . [and] with contempt of "some Upper Indian peasant." He forgets that such a peasant is also a child of God and therefore as valuable to Him as our angry correspondent. Men of Mr. Hitchens's mind are in great part responsible for our present tensions among nations and our amorphous but dangerous hatreds. Fewer atom bombs and more charity and less rage might go a long way to restore peace and freedom in our world, a view with which Mr. Hitchens would not agree.

This gentleman writes with reverence of "the Western tradition of culture" as if that culture is a thing apart and unique from other cultures! . . .

I as a Republican, and a strong one at that, am as concerned with what our correspondent calls "left-wing and Communist sympathizers in high government" as he is. But I am finding it increasingly ominous that the epithet "Communist" is now being applied to every liberal and Democrat and labor union indiscriminately . . .

If Norman Cousins is "platitudinous," as Mr. Hitchens states, then let's have some more of his platitudes! They are the voice of reason, kindness, and charity in a wilderness of hate and ruin.

TAYLOR CALDWELL.

Eggertsville, N. Y.

A Soviet Collapse?

SIR: In his review [*SRL* Oct. 27] of John Fischer's "Master Plan USA" Edgar Ansel Mowrer comments adversely on "the belief, originally publicized by George F. Kennan and later — less convincingly — by Edward Crankshaw in 'Cracks in the Kremlin Wall'" that the policy makers of the West may count on "a Soviet collapse" some time in the next two decades.

It is a good job that Mr. Mowrer found me unconvincing in this matter, since it is the last thing I wanted to say or, indeed, as far as I can make out, did in fact say. That particular book is concerned with arriving at an accurate definition of the real and active enemy and then with assesssing his strength, weakness, and intentions. It tries to show that the Kremlin is, among other things, more vulnerable than is commonly supposed—so vulnerable that, as I see it, Stalin could not afford to launch a major war, even if he wanted one. This is very different from predicting "a Soviet collapse."

On one page I suggest that such a collapse might occur if certain domestic policies fail, while pointing out that if they succeed (and nobody can tell whether they will succeed or fail) the Soviet Union will be much stronger in ten years' time than it is today. On another page, and in accordance with the general principle that all things change, I suggest that sooner or later the Soviet regime will either disappear in catastrophe or else become so modified by slow pressures that its whole character will be altered. I then say: "But we cannot wait on this. . . ."

It may be that Mr. Mowrer has misunderstood me because I do not rush in with the outline of a constructive policy for the West. This is not because I think we should all sit down behind an atomic curtain and fold our hands. It is because my book is essentially an appreciation of an existing situation of the kind that has to be made before appropriate policies can be worked out. Intelligence officers in war have to make appreciations for the Operations staff. The fact that they do not include their own ideas on how the battle should be fought does not mean that they do not believe in battles. It seems to me unfortunate if an analyst of Soviet Russia must be accused of Micawberism simply because he confines himself to his proper job and refrains from pushing forward operational plans.

EDWARD CRANKSHAW.

Sandhurst, England.

Talking About Freedom

SIR: Richard Brown's letter in *SRL* Nov. 17 cautions us not to take high-flown freedom talk too seriously. Maybe the people who signed the Freedom House Statement in *SRL* Oct. 27 haven't backed their talk with as much action as some of those on the sidelines would like to see, but at least they still want to talk.

Perhaps this kind of talk sounds a little ridiculous when confronted with Mr. Brown's kind of practical logic, but even though they haven't produced a declaration worthy of an Abraham Lincoln I hope people keep on talking about freedom.

Talk is action when people can say what they think; and this is Mr. Brown's best hope for cutting his eight-hour day to six hours. I hope he won't object to reading more of this kind of talk during those extra two hours. The connection between freedom and practical satisfactions is, as Mr. Brown says, "less obvious," but it is there nevertheless.

DAVID G. EDWARDS.

Concord, Calif.

Literary Birth Control

SIR: Your editorial "How to Kill a Book" [*SRL* Nov. 24] raises some sharp issues which require consideration. One basic problem of book publishing needs to be stressed—the simple fact that too many books are being published.

No matter how the timing is handled (or, as you note, *not* handled), the sheer volume of books is too great. I saw figures indicating that, despite the parlous state of publishing and despite the groaning of the publishers, this year saw a record number of titles in publication. That doesn't make sense.

A bit of literary birth control is urgently called for.

HARNETT T. KANE.

New Orleans, La.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"Oh, go back to sleep. You just *think* one star is shining brighter."

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Music to My Ears

IRMGARD SEEFRIED—THE MET'S "MANON"—MONTEUX'S "SACRE"

PEOPLE who listen a great deal to records often find that when an artist admired sight unseen materializes in the physical being the valuation is likely to be somewhat different from the preconception. Pondering this rediscovery after Irmgard Seefried's New York debut in Town Hall, one perceived the obvious but often ignored fact that the voice is but part of the totality any artist presents —that the physical being may well enhance or diminish the whole sensation experienced.

As a physical being Miss Seefried of the Vienna Opera is as handsome as her soprano voice is distinguished, which would seem an ideal mating. However, she has been so meticulously coached in what to do, when to smile, how to acknowledge applause, even how to act out each of her songs, that the eye was working at cross purposes with the ear. Moreover, when the listener's privilege of looking away was indulged one found her singing of Wolf's "Das verlassene Mägdlein" or Mozart's "Sehnsucht nach dem Frühling" rather superficial. One fancied that the effects produced for the eye —a stare straight ahead for drama, a toss of the shoulder for coquetry (as at the end of Wolf's "Elfenlied"), a step back for fear—were keeping Miss Seefried so busy that she was putting little of the emotions into the sound.

Whether this was done for local consumption was hard to say. When she worked with full voice and all intelligence, as in Hindemith's new "Weihnachts Motetten," she managed some wonderful feats of vocal manipulation, an amazingly pure delivery of the Latin text, and a truly dramatic portrayal of the Biblical incidents Hindemith has treated with the pictorial range and musical imagery of his best accomplishments. This is an important addition to the Hindemith catalogue, and it is not likely to be sung with more ease or vividness than Miss Seefried provided. It was after this that she went to work on Wolf, Mozart, and Schubert with the aforementioned results. This is such a delightful voice and generally so well used that one regrets to see it misapplied. Paul Ulanowsky played his usual fine accompaniments through it all.

* * *

"Why 'Manon'?" seemed a relevant question on the occasion of its first Metropolitan performance this season, considering the cast and production offered on behalf of Massenet. The French Manon has never been a fortunate role for Licia Albanese, and it becomes less, rather than more, fortunate as time passes; Giuseppe di Stefano has the vocal quality for Des Grieux but neither the dramatic culture nor the musical cultivation; and Fausto Cleva's conducting did nothing to repair the unbalance on stage. He started well enough, but when the pattern of music and dialogue began to unfold it went by metronomic beat rather than with the ease and fluency the style requires.

As Lescaut (Manon's cousin, not "her brother" as the program contended) Martial Singher was conspicuously virtuous—not because he exceeded the requirements of his part, but rather because he alone gave some value to the text. Jerome Hines's Comte des Grieux was suitably serious—though some thought more than a little pensively of the late Léon Rothier.

One was reminded too of the recent "Manon" of the City Center, which was no triumph of beautiful song but had at least two virtues: a sound style set by the well-indoctrinated Jean Morel and a cast suitable to the dimensions of the theatre. This Met "Manon" provided neither. The second may be difficult to come by, considering the size of the downtown house; but there is no clear reason why the theatre shouldn't command a conductor who knows French style. The singers who haven't got it aren't going to learn it by themselves. If local rivalries rule out Morel, other possible candidates include Roger Désormière, Ernest Ansermet, Ernest Bour, even the venerable Monteux.

Irmgard Seefried—"a delightful voice."

* * *

The veritable, as well as venerable, Monteux came to mind in this week, doubtless because he was in the metropolitan area (if not the Metropolitan area) as conductor of the Boston Symphony in place of the ailing Charles Munch. As substantial as he is in girth, so he is in musical mastery, as was attested by a repertory that ranged from Beethoven's "Pastoral" to Debussy's "Gigues," from "Siegfried's Rhine Journey" out of "Götterdämmerung" to Stravinsky's "Sacre du Printemps," at the Saturday matinee.

Stravinsky was in town, but almost perversely spent the afternoon as Rudolf Bing's guest at the matinee of "Rigoletto." Presumably the subject of discussion was "The Rake's Progress"; but Stravinsky's own progress has rarely been better exemplified than by the cheering throng that remained after "Sacre." Perhaps the work has been better played somewhere, sometime; but I have not heard anything to approach Monteux's exposition of the musical essence of the score, its grandeur of thought and mastery of statement. Every note was audible in a place predestined for it, and the rhythmic contour had a majestic precision far removed from the usual frenetic agitation imposed upon it by conductors less disciplined than Monteux. As for the dramatic richness of the orchestral sound, its bountiful clangor and drive—it is not likely to happen quite like this soon again.

* * *

Somehow, one feels that if Johann Sebastian Bach had been in town on December 5, 1951, he would have spent the evening at Town Hall, regardless of what was happening at the Met. For that was the evening when William Scheide began another season with the Bach Aria Group—not normally a prospect to set the pulses racing—and offered Erna Berger and Marian Anderson as his soloists. As befits their voices, Miss Berger was soloist in the "Wedding Cantata" ("Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten") and Miss Anderson in "Widerstehe doch der Sünde" ("Pray resist sin"), with the two sharing the beauties of "Es wartet Alles auf dich" ("These wait all upon thee") with Norman Farrow, an excellent basso. Miss Berger's crystal-clear soprano and Miss Anderson's dusky broad alto merged in a musical experience not easily forgotten. For his part, Scheide's choral direction was impressively expert; his sense of vocal vs. instrumental balance less so.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Seeing Things

STAR BRIGHT

IF THERE were no other reason for seeing "I Am a Camera"* (and there are many), Julie Harris would supply one. It is no pallid reason either. It is not the kind of weak summons which mere talent or competence issues. It is far more commanding than that. More exciting, too. Because, there's no sense beating around the bush, Miss Harris is a young actress blessed unmistakably with genius.

Everyone who saw her as the dreamstruck adolescent in "The Member of the Wedding" was forced to realize that she was no ordinary player. Her gawky little egotist, with her cropped hair, her unbecoming clothes, her disconcerting lack of manners, was an unforgettable performance. If it jangled the nerves, it also tore the heart. It was a full-length portrait of youthful loneliness. Its honesty, like its skill, was inescapable.

Fine as Miss Harris's Frankie was, there was no telling where it would lead. Young actors often find themselves in parts which are just right for them and at which they excel. During the year of their good fortune they are roundly and correctly praised. Then other seasons follow and things begin to go wrong. They never find the right part again or prove right in the parts which come their way. Gradually they sink out of sight, dashing the hopes which they had raised. They are like one-book authors. They do not have in themselves those rich reserves and that staying power which are indispensable to the making of a genuine career.

Miss Harris is different. Her Sally Bowles in "I Am a Camera" has nothing in common with her Frankie—except excellence. In looks, manner, voice, gestures, and stance she is another person; a character no less complete, but completely changed. Where her Frankie was naive, her Sally is experienced. Although a tart by temperament and practice, she is fundamentally a lady. There is a gentility about her which her uninhibited habits and vocabulary cannot disguise. Her availability has somehow left her innocence uncorrupted.

Being a human being, she seethes with contradictions. She is generous yet selfish, heartless but kind, and one of those mortal chameleons whose nature is always taking on the color of a new scene, a new mood, or a changed attitude. She is a night club singer who dreams of being a great actress and who never stops acting. She lives on a diet of self-sustaining lies. At one moment she is in a champagne mood, flamboyant, brandishing a cigarette, and striking sophisticated glamour-girl poses. At the next she is an eager young girl, seemingly simple and honest in spite of being as capricious as ever.

All these variations present challenges to Miss Harris which she meets so triumphantly that they do not seem challenges at all. She is able to make the difficult seem easy and to act as a virtuoso without calling attention to her acting. Moreover, in the process of creating Sally Bowles, Miss Harris creates something else. It is a strong faith in her ability; a conviction that she could play almost any part; an awareness, which grows from scene to scene, of being in the presence of a true and important actress.

The play, made memorable by Miss Harris's performance, has been wheedled by John van Druten from Christopher Isherwood's "The Berlin Stories." Certainly, to those who have not seen it, no title could seem more awkward than "I Am a Camera." Yet, clumsy as it is, it has its point and explains itself early in the evening.

Mr. Van Druten's is a script which seeks to avoid that tidying up, hence distortion, of life which is the expected and accepted feature of a carefully plotted drama. He is writing with deliberate casualness about a group of young people who go their way in the Berlin of 1930 without realizing, at first, the sinister forces already at work in a city where their search is pleasure.

These young people include a Jewish girl; a gigolo who is Jewish but does not admit it; an eccentric American millionaire who fails to fulfill his promises of extravagant gifts and world tours; and Sally Bowles's English compatriot and friend who is known, somewhat embarrassingly, as Christopher Isherwood. In addition to being a character, this friend is the play's narrator. He explains the aim and method of Mr. van Druten's writing when he describes himself as a passive observer who records what he sees and hears with no more editorial selection than a camera with its shutter open.

Although a process supposedly as non-selective as this is bound to re-

Julie Harris—"blessed unmistakably with genius."

I AM A CAMERA, by John van Druten, adapted from Christopher Isherwood's "The Berlin Stories." Directed by Mr. van Druten. Setting by Boris Aronson. Costumes by Ellen Goldsborough. Presented by Gertrude Macy in association with Walter Starcke. With Julie Harris, William Prince, Martin Brooks, Catherine Willard, Olga Fabian, Edward Andrews, and Marian Winters. At the Empire Theatre, New York City. Opened November 28, 1951.

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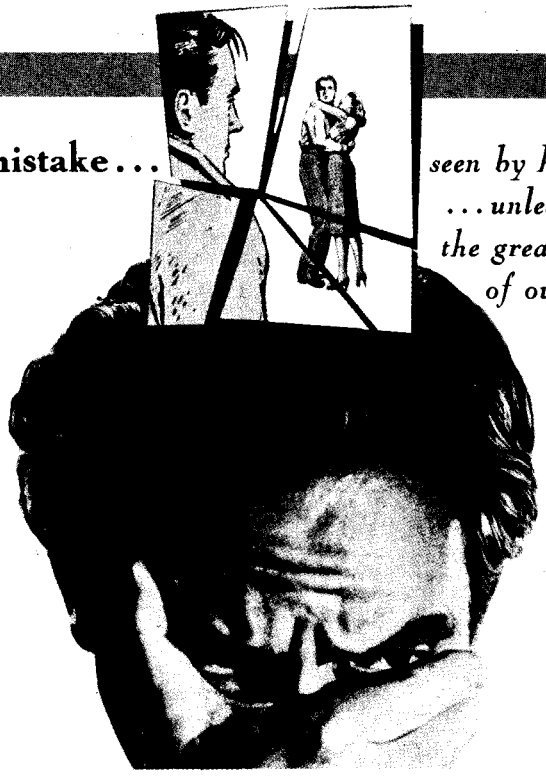

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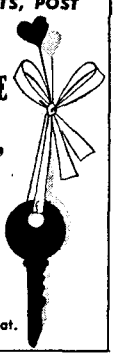

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sult in some pictures which are out of focus, the experiment more than justifies itself. Whatever its faults may be, the play is never dull. Its best scenes are fresh and sensitive and have a fine honesty. They have that unposed, spontaneous quality which can endow a snapshot with a vitality unknown to most studio portraits.

Few characters I can remember have been drawn as candidly as Sally Bowles. Part of her validity is that she is left unresolved and that her inconsistency is shown as her chief consistency. For this very reason she may confuse those who are accustomed to having people denied their complexity as soon as they are turned into "characters." Yet it seems to me a great relief to encounter a character who is not all good or bad, generous or selfish, vulgar or refined, and who, instead of being as neatly wrapped as a Christmas package, is left as disordered as she would be in life.

There are other aspects of the writing of "I Am a Camera" which I admire and for which I am grateful. One is the truth with which it makes clear how most of us stumble from day to day with a vision as limited as a kodak's, seeing only what is in front of us, caring only for what concerns us, and often remaining strangely unchanged even by world affairs which can toss our lives about like leaves in a gale.

Mr. van Druten is no less effective in his quiet suggestions of Nazi barbarism already showing itself in the Berlin of 1930. No Brownshirts appear, and none of the physical violence to be found in most plays dealing with Nazism occurs on stage. A landlady, kindly by temperament but already parroting the anti-Semitic propaganda she has heard from soapbox orators; mention of the public funeral of a dead leader; and a bruise on the cheek of the Jewish girl, caused by a rock thrown by some of Hitler's hoodlums —these are the indirect means by which Mr. van Druten creates the sense of the condemned Berlin in which his characters move. They are enormously touching, particularly in the case of the Jewish girl who is played with heartbreaking simplicity by Marian Winters. The monumental tragedy of her people and stupid inhumanity of the Nazis are eloquently communicated by a bruise small enough to be covered by a bandaid.

MR. VAN DRUTEN'S direction is masterly in its eye for details and its sense of small values and their larger overtones. It is wonderfully knowing, human, and civilized. Boris Aronson's Berlin boarding house is, too, a

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perfect background for the lighthearted Bohemia it menaces with a heavy Deutsch atmosphere.

The cast, with one exception, is no less contributive. William Prince succeeds admirably in turning into positive virtues the negative "big brother" qualities of Sally Bowles's loyal friend and counselor. Edward Andrews is as funny as only an American can be when seen through European eyes, and Olga Fabian is a warmhearted and mothering landlady. My single quarrel with the production comes with the casting of Catherine Willard as Sally Bowles's mother. Miss Willard gives a straight stock company performance. She is blowzy and hardboiled where she needs to be tweedy and "county." She, therefore, adds confusion to the evening by failing to explain the difference between Sally's present pursuits and her conventional background.

I trust I have indicated the shortcomings and the virtues of "I Am a Camera." Both are present. Of the two, however, the virtues seem to me to be far the more important. Among these virtues count not only the fascination of the better scenes and the general excellence of the performance, but also the sheer magic of Miss Harris's acting. So far as she is concerned, playgoers are bound to feel something of that excitement which astronomers must know when a new star shines before their eyes.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

FRASER YOUNG'S
LITERARY CRYPT No. 444

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 444 will be found in the next issue.

KWXWCTMXM, FM F LSFMM,

FCD JWX FNDCMD XW

AZGSTL OTMLZMMTWJ WE

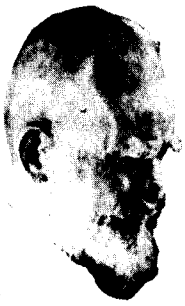
XQDTC XCWZGSDM.

—CWGDCX GDJLQSDU.

Answer to No. 443

If you don't say anything, you won't be called on to repeat it.

—CALVIN COOLIDGE.



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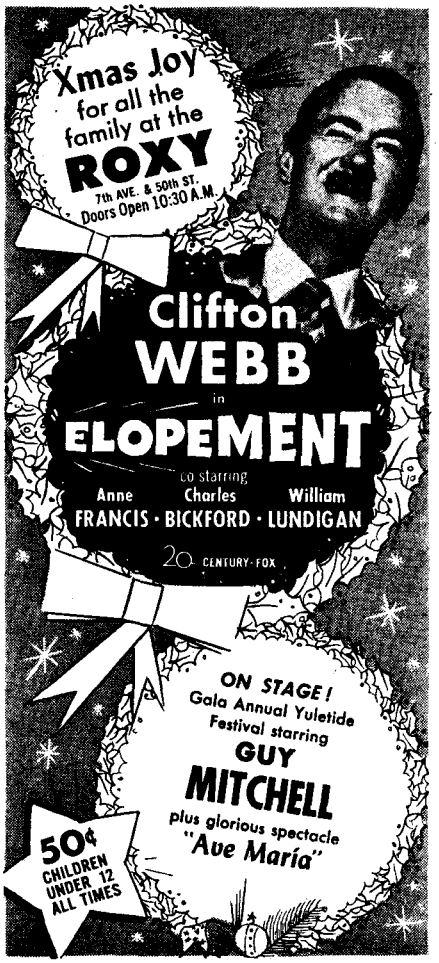

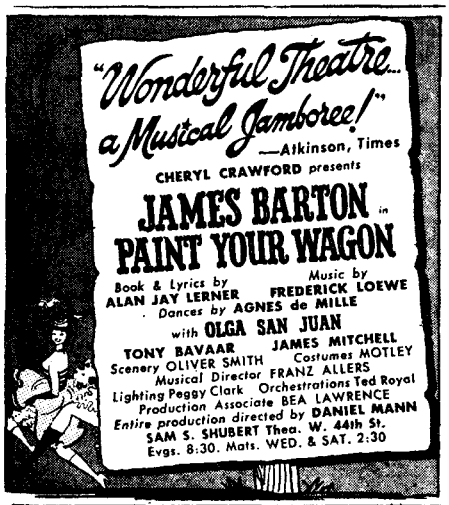
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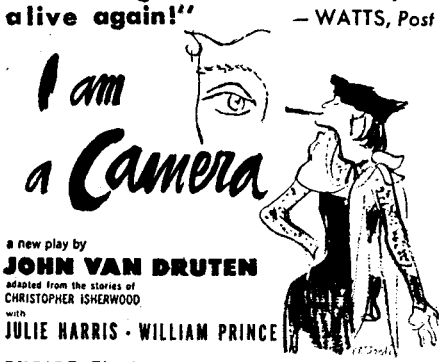

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The Theatre.

The magic of the make-believe world of the stage almost invariably eludes efforts to capture it in print, but writers keep on trying. This year the lives and some of the glamour of such great contemporary figures of the theatre as the Barrymores ("We Barrymores," by Lionel Barrymore and Cameron Shipp), Ethel Waters ("His Eye Is on the Sparrow," by herself and Charles Samuels), Jimmy Durante ("Schnozzola," by Gene Fowler), and Lawrence Langner ("The Magic Curtain," by himself) have been recorded. John Gassner has made available the texts of sixty-five great plays from Aeschylus to Arthur Miller in "A Treasury of the Theatre," while John Chapman draws on last season for "The Best Plays of 1950-1951." The theatre's artistic record during the past half century is stated in Alan S. Downer's "Fifty Years of American Drama" (below); its business ups-and-downs in Abel Green's and Joe Laurie, Jr.'s "Show Biz: From Vaude to Video" (next page).

The Theatre Grows Up

FIFTY YEARS OF AMERICAN DRAMA: 1900-1950. By Alan S. Downer. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co. 158 pp. $2.50.

By Joseph Wood Krutch

NOT a few literary critics regard all American drama as still beyond the pale, as part of our "popular" literature, perhaps, but not of what is called the "serious." They may grant that it is not as obviously sub-literary now as it was forty years ago, but to them even O'Neill, Nobel Prize notwithstanding, is not worthy of "serious consideration." Behind this attitude lies, for one thing, an a priori conviction that what is commercial cannot possibly be good and, for another, just a touch of snobbery. Behind it lies also, perhaps, this much of simple truth: we have produced no dramatist who has remained for a period of years capable of attracting audiences like those which still go to Ibsen and Shaw. Even O'Neill is not often revived in England or America, though the time may be coming when he will be. Certain plays which seemed considerable achievements in the enthusiastic Twenties will probably never seem important again. But neither, for that matter, will a number of the novels of the same period which find a place in the conventional histories. If nothing which is not indisputably for all time is worth consideration then an adequate discussion of American literature during the first half of this century could be got into a very small space indeed. If, on the other hand, we find it worthwhile to ponder and evaluate whatever was honestly intended, sincerely written, and seriously taken by intelligent people, then there is certainly no reason why the drama should be slighted as so often it is.

Something of the sort is obviously the conviction of the editors of the new series called "Twentieth-Century Literature in America," since the first volume happens to be the present book. Mr. Downer, who teaches at Princeton, has written a very crisp, informative survey only some one hundred and fifty pages long but seemingly unhurried and reasonably spacious because of the method wisely chosen. Instead of the long list of titles, with a phrase for each, which one commonly gets in textbooks, there is a series of chapters devoted either to general topics or to a type of play. In either case the points are made by the analysis of a few memorable or, sometimes, merely typical works. The result is that for all the brevity of the whole work one gets a sense of some actual familiarity with significant plays instead of a mere catalogue.

Mr. Downer's whole attitude is moderate and sensible, neither claiming too much nor unwilling to recognize substantial merit when he finds it. By way of introduction there is a survey of the theatre about 1900 and by way of a conclusion a similar survey of the season which officially ended in the spring of 1951. This is a good way of making easy some understanding of just what changes of taste and atmosphere, as well as what increase in absolute merit, have taken

Joseph Wood Krutch, Brander Matthews professor of dramatic literature at Columbia University, is the author of "The American Theatre since 1918" and other books.

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place, and it serves to clinch the principal thesis which is simply that the fifty years have seen a measurable improvement at least so far as the drama's ability to detach itself from the influence of the "theatrical," in the worst sense of the term, is concerned.

No one could possibly deny that at nearly all times and places the commercial theatre has tended to impose certain limitations on subject matter, on form, and on intellectual freedom. At most times these limitations have been more difficult for the playwright to resist than are the limitations imposed by the book trade or by the more fluid audience for books. What is even more serious is the fact that at many periods audiences have taken these limitations for granted and gone to the theatre with expectations quite different from those which even an individual member of the audience would be content with in reading a novel. Mr. Downer's point is simply that in 1900 the American playwright submitted to the restrictions much more completely than he did during the Twenties and Thirties or than he does at the present moment. It is not merely that times have changed so that we are free to say things which we formerly could not or that in general the imaginative writer has a wider choice of methods. The most important thing so far as the drama is concerned are the facts that the dramatist shares much more completely than he did in 1900 the current freedoms and that the spectator is much less likely now than then to accept in the theatre an artificiality, an insincerity, or an intellectual staleness which he refuses to accept in the novel. To that extent, at least, the American theatre has grown up. Its plays assume, as half a century ago they did not, the same intellectual and artistic responsibility and demand the same intellectual freedoms as are assumed and demanded by the novels and essays and stories read by the same public.

Parade Standing Still

SHOW BIZ: From Vaude to Video. By Abel Green and Joe Laurie, Jr. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 613 pp. $5.

By Garson Kanin

ALL theatre folk, and some "private people," share a pleasant pastime —that of wandering through old stage magazines, photographs, publications, programs, and records. The ephemeral past is recaptured, and a welcome nostalgia floods the spirit harrowed by the ever-troublesome present. Yesterday's glamour always seems shinier than today's. Then there is another sort of looking back—bringing on a sweet and complex feeling for persons, places, and things one has never known.

Except for the surprising omission of photographs, material for both sorts of remembrance is present in abundance in the hefty book which Abel Green and Joe Laurie, Jr., have put together. No one knows precisely when or how show business began. Perhaps with business itself. A complete history, then, would be unwieldy even if possible. The makers of this book have chosen as their province the first half of the twentieth century. A fortuitous choice, since it appears to have been a packed, exciting, revolutionary era. Further, they have built their account in the main around the life and times of the late Sime Silverman, founder and editor of *Variety*. Known as "Mr. Broadway," he reflected the pulse of his street. *Variety*, the venerable journal from which this book has been culled, is a living, breathing, ever up-to-date personality, a handsome old girl who sings the latest songs and dances the Raspa. An air-conditioned brownstone. An ancient Chinese cabinet into which a color television receiver has been installed.

From vaude to video it has indeed journeyed and taken the trip in stride, reporting and recording the most startling happenings as though it had expected them to happen. So we leaf through these pages and feel the pulsating change of media in our time. Once the greatest number of *Variety*'s pages was devoted to vaudeville. New acts. Routes. "At liberty" ads. Came films, and the proportion of space changed. Radio. Talkies. TV. The recording business once fell off to a single page. Now, with the help of juke boxes, it has re-commanded more. So it goes.

Singers, dancers, pianists, actors, playwrights, wigmakers, hoofers, jugglers, song writers, chorus girls, tycoons, strip teasers, novelists, stagehands, magicians, cameramen, promoters, announcers, producers, washboard instrumentalists, directors, violinists, lyricists, bill posters, librettists, band leaders, ventriloquists, torch singers, cooch dancers, comics, critics, disc jockeys, emcees, fan dancers, commentators, wrestlers, musicians, layoffs, song pluggers, prima donnas, gagmen, ticket speculators, ballet dancers, fortune tellers, agents, sponsors, technicians, and female impersonators march through its pages—battling each other—and the public. *Variety*, across the years, has kept score. By its nature it has concerned itself in the main with the *business* of the theatre and related forms. Other (and less lively) publications have dealt with the art side of things. Somewhere between these two preoccupations lies the resolution of the conflict involving an art which is too much a business and a business which is too much an art.

If this book has a fault it is that one must peer between its lines to see the

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Garson Kanin has written and directed many stage plays and movies, including "Born Yesterday."

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development of our national culture. In the end, surely more matters than ruthless competition, buying and selling, struggling to please the fickle crowd.

"Show Biz: From Vaude to Video" is written in the familiar argot which its title suggests. It is a dialect not difficult to decipher once the reader has acquired the hang of it. And should the book fall into the hands of a square here and there, the authors have provided a glossary.

The great Colonel Stoopnagle once said that nobody ever really got a proper look at a parade as it marched by. His idea, to remedy this condition, was to have the parade stand still and let the crowd walk around and look at it. This admirable plan has been carried out here. A great, gaudy, exciting parade is before us, standing still, to be examined and savored.

The authors of this remarkable book will probably not consider it a compliment to be told that their work is an important historical and sociological document. Sounds too longhair. But it is that. They would doubtless prefer to hear that it is boffo or socko or b.o. Well, it's that, too.

Theatre Notes

THE LAST ACTOR-MANAGERS. By Hesketh Pearson. Harper. $3. Hesketh Pearson, once an actor himself, biographer of Shaw, Wilde, and Dickens, writes with style and engaging wit of Forbes-Robertson and nine other celebrated actor-managers who dominated the London stage for half a century before the close of George V's reign. He knew them all, appeared in the companies of several, and describes their personalities, foibles, and accomplishments which explain the place they held in the hearts of their countrymen. Appropriately "stagey" photographs show these gentlemen costumed for their roles and counterfeiting a gamut of dispositions.

Forbes-Robertson, who really disliked acting and would rather have been a painter, was the only famous actor Pearson ever saw "who was incapable of giving an indifferent performance of any conceivable part." Sir Herbert Tree was an indifferent Shakespearean, unsuited for heroic parts, with a throaty delivery and bizarre gestures. Yet Tree, who founded the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, packed His Majesty's with spectacles, such as Louis Parker's "Joseph and His Brethren," drew SRO with "Trilby" at the Haymarket, not to mention the brittle comedies of Wilde. A thorough "ham," engrossed with his own performance, he once interrupted himself in the midst of Macbeth's description of the murdered Duncan to remark, "They won't be able to see me from that box. Will that gentleman oblige me by moving out of the way? Thank you."

Harley Granville-Barker—"realistic."

Handsome Sir George Alexander, who flourished at the St. James's, where "peers of the realm were as common on the stage as they were in the stalls," was a graceful but "expressionless" actor who swashbuckled through "The Prisoner of Zenda" and "If I Were King."

Sir Frank Benson, former Oxford athlete, who established the Actors Association and the Stage Guild, predecessors of British Equity, was the Douglas Fairbanks of his day, although he had the satisfaction of training more and better Shakespearean stars than any of the others.

Lewis Waller, whose voice Shaw likened to the clarionet's chalumeau register, was the ideal matinee idol, beloved for Romeo, D'Artagnan, and, of course, "Monsieur Beaucaire," which he revived time and again. "The Only Way" did as much for Sir John Martin-Harvey who, at seventy-six, was playing Sydney Carton in the same style that had fascinated playgoers for forty years.

H. B. and Laurence Irving, sons of old Sir Henry, suffered the disadvantages of having a famous acting father. Oscar Asche, the barrel-lunged, made a fortune out of "Chu Chin Chow," which ran continuously at His Majesty's for five years.

The brilliant Harley Granville-Barker, remembered more as a manager, playwright, and producer of Shakespeare and Shaw, incomparable in the realistic school and noted for his ability to force his actors to "think in character," winds up Hesketh Pearson's entertaining recollections of a vanished theatre caste whose protagonists, for all their whims and deficiencies, enriched their profession and blazed a trail that many of their successors have followed advantageously. —Russell Rhodes.

ON PRODUCING SHAKESPEARE. By Ronald Watkins. Norton. $5. Shakespeare was one of those rare playwrights who were consulted in regard to the type of stage that would best suit their talents. The Globe Playhouse, then, had the Bard's approval where construction was concerned and probably all of his plays paraded across its stage. Ronald Watkins pleads strongly for a reconstruction of the Globe in London, a project, it may be interesting to note, which in this country has received attention at Hofstra College, where the Globe stage has been reproduced and made ready for Shakespearean drama under the direction of John Cranford Adams. To buttress his views in favor of bringing back a Globe Playhouse for Shakespeare productions, Mr. Watkins illustrates with some detail the way in which the plays had originally been staged. There are diagrammatic illustrations of the stage and playhouse, a discussion of the prompt book material available through the early Quartos and the first Folio, a detailed study of how Shakespeare specifically adapted his plays to the mechanical stage mediums available, especially in the planning of scene rotations, costuming, entrances and exits, battle scenes, and music. Consideration is also given to the acting tradition of the time as far as speech, miming, characterization, and positioning are concerned. Mr. Watkins makes constant use of the text of Shakespeare's plays to demonstrate "how it was done," and in this he is ably abetted by the excellent and profuse illustrations supplied by Maurice Percival.

The nostalgic idea of a Globe revival so persuasively presented by Mr. Watkins, however, should not ignore the fact that Shakespeare had to turn necessity into virtue. The modern stage is no longer constrained by such necessities and at times does honor the "virtues" of which scholars are fond. It is possible to go along with many of Mr. Watkins's ideas, but when he indicates the desire for a return to boy-actresses one may be forgiven for rebelling at the thought of tender striplings with the voices of eunuchs taking the places of Hepburn, Bankhead, or Cornell.

—Siegfried Mandel.

PREVIEWS OF ENTERTAINMENT. By Gilbert Seldes. Bantam Books. 25¢. Gilbert Seldes, veteran critic and author in the lively arts, has become in

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recent years a man with a mission. In last year's "The Great Audience" he described that mission at some length. He wants people to be fully aware that they are always paying for whatever entertainment they get, paying either in hard cash at the box offices of plays and movies, or with their precious time if it be radio and television. Further, he argues, since we are paying in one way or another, we should make certain that we are getting what we really want. Only by purchasing our entertainment with the same discrimination we use for other commodities can we avoid disappointment. And further, by channelizing our demands, by specifically rejecting what we don't want, we actually stimulate the production of what we really do.

That was, in brief, the argument of last year's book. But Mr. Seldes knows well that the potential market for such a treatise is numbered in the thousands. To be effective his theory must achieve a mass base. And so, quite logically, this year he has turned to the cheap, paper-bound books, with sales in the hundreds of thousands and even millions. As its name implies, "Previews" gives advance information on movies, television and radio shows, books, plays, even ballets. And as a guide it proves a step in the right direction. Obviously, Mr. Seldes cannot be critical here. Most of the entertainments he describes were still on paper when he wrote of them. Some of them still are. But he does categorize; so that if you like (let's imagine) quiz shows on TV, "Previews" tells what you can expect from each of the dozen or more shows listed.

Categorizing however—and Mr. Seldes would be the first to agree with this—can never take the place of critical judgment on a completed work. Some films look fine on paper, horrible on the screen; others read like third-rate hack work yet manage to come alive through the genius of a fine director. "Previews" is a handy, and certainly a readable, guide to mass entertainments. It also has, tucked away at the back, a good deal of sound advice on how we can help make these entertainments better. But the best guide to discriminating buying is still those critics whose opinions you respect or whose reactions you can gauge. Read them, and make your entertainment purchases accordingly. Trouble with "Previews," it's still *caveat* to the general.

—Arthur Knight.

TV and Radio

MOVIES ARE BETTER THAN EVER LOVIN' TV

ABOUT a month ago things had been going wonderfully well at our house. I had read two novels, reread some Mark Twain, and I even did a little writing on a book which is due at the publishers last May. Then about a week ago some friends dropped in and spent the entire evening staring into space. The next day these so-called friends reported us to General Sarnoff for a television set that was out of order, and a man came that evening and fixed it.

Caught in the trap again we watched television shows for about a week. Then one night in a fit of utter abandon and sheer desperation my wife and I sneaked down the back service elevator and crept into a neighborhood movie theatre, where to our surprise we found several hundred other displaced viewers, all eying each other furtively. There was tension in the air, but underneath you felt the spirit of brotherhood found only where free men and women congregate. Although one note of the NBC chimes would have sent us all scurrying back to our sets.

The picture was "A Place in the Sun." It was quite good. A man next to me in the darkened theatre nudged me surreptitiously and whispered, "It's quite good." I glanced cautiously around, then unperceivedly nodded my head ever so slightly. A man back of me, bending over as if to tie his shoe, whispered in my ear that he had seen "A Streetcar Named Desire," and he added, "It was quite good." A woman next to my wife muttered behind her handbag that we should see "American in Paris" if it ever comes around to our neighborhood. She added, almost too rashly I thought, that she had gone to see it on a Tuesday night at eight o'clock!

With all this display of sheer audacity about me I soon relaxed and concentrated on the screen. There was a newsreel showing last Saturday's football game. My wife nudged me in the middle of an eighty-five-yard touchdown run.

"There are those lines again, dear," she said. "Fix it."

Automatically I arose and went toward the screen. The white yard-lines were plainly visible, and in our house that means only one thing—the second knob on the left—you turn it to the right. Half way down the aisle I caught myself and returned sheepishly to my seat.

"They're gone now," she said.

THERE followed a travelogue. As colorful scene followed colorful scene there came a slow dissolve. She nudged me again.

"Fix it," she said.

Again I walked toward the screen; but before I got there it had straightened itself out, and the picture was right again. My rehabilitation was coming along slowly, but by the time the cartoon was on I was beginning to accustom myself to this medium, which seemed even much more professional than it had ever seemed before.

However, I found I couldn't relax. I felt myself growing slowly rigid, my hands tightly clenching the arms of the seat. I couldn't understand what was happening at first; then when the trailer announcing next week's picture came on I realized what it was. I had been waiting for the commercial. And here it was. But somehow it seemed not to disturb me. Nobody spelled at me, opened up iceboxes, or shaved himself. Nobody washed clothes cleaner than any soap, or sounded off. Nobody danced across a package of gum or poked the choke or scrubbed the hub. All it announced was that "Captain Horatio Hornblower" was coming next week and it starred Gregory Peck and Virginia Mayo. The man next to me nudged me again. "I hear it's quite good," he whispered.

Following the trailer came the friendliest thing that happened all evening. It was an announcement that coffee was being served in the lounge if the patrons cared for any. It even mentioned the brand of coffee, but when it didn't add, "Get some tonight. Try it. You'll never drink another coffee," I was so pleased I motioned my wife that we'd go down to the lounge and have some. As we gathered up our belongings I made the mistake of taking one final look at the screen. There was a final trailer:

"When you're in the lounge enjoy our large screen TV set put there for your entertainment."

—Goodman Ace.

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SRL Goes to the Movies

MR. MILLER'S INDIGNANT THEME

PERHAPS no American play of the last decade has been more heralded than "Death of a Salesman," and some critics, by way of compliment, wondered how Hollywood could possibly make a movie of it. The reference, I suspect, was to its subject matter, since it dealt harshly with some of the illusory values that Hollywood has been known, all too often, to pump into its products. Nevertheless, "Death of a Salesman" has been turned into a film, and it would seem fully appropriate that its screening should be entrusted to Stanley Kramer, a youngish producer who keeps violating with each of his presentations the usual West Coast concepts of what constitutes "box-office" and what doesn't. The trust with Arthur Miller and with the producers of the play has been well kept; there has been no tampering, no tinkering. If there was any concession at all it was in the choice of Fredric March for the Willy Loman role, instead of Lee J. Cobb or Thomas Mitchell, both of whom played it with distinction on the stage. And here, by the way, is a quarrel that may well rage for some time to come, for Mr. March, excellent actor that he is, does not show up well.

It should be stated at once that this reviewer happens to be one of the forlorn cult that doesn't regard the play with quite the awe shared by the great majority of its large and intelligent audience. I tend to concur with the view that regards Willy Loman as more of a "case" than a man suffering from a tragic dilemma. A pitiful, buffeted figure he is indeed, but since his life was dedicated to living out some simple illusions that grown people generally drop after their first contact with the "ethics" of the business world I never could take him with quite the seriousness with which, I think, I was intended to. And putting upon his puny shoulders the burden of Mr. Miller's large and indignant theme results in a kind of overwriting, and now and then overstatement. Fredric March, with his sensitive and intelligent face, highlights this flaw all the more, it seems to me. At the least, it was miscasting to have him portray so naive a character. Oddly his Willy Loman looks more like someone who has gone to seed because of too much drinking, and in the more intense moments he resembles, with his set stare and glare, the kind of schizoid case one sees in the hospital films occasionally shown by little cinema societies.

Mildred Dunnock in the role of his wife shows up much better, and the minor parts, handled in almost every case by actors who were in one or another of the stage companies of the play, are gems. The fact of the matter is that Laslo Benedek, the director, has concentrated much more on getting performances from his people than on cinema values. We have largely been given not much more than the photographed play, and that kind of film treatment generally results, as here, in a static quality. You sensed the outside life in Elia Kazan's direction of the play, but in the movie there is little indication of the impinging environment, something which it would have been so simple for the camera, with its way of taking you into hidden places, to achieve. I have the feeling Stanley Roberts's screenplay is somewhat at fault, as well as the direction, for little effort was made in the writing to go beyond the restrictions of the stage technique. Yet, in all justice, one must say that the camera and the soundtrack are better fitted for the flashbacks and the symbolic effects so important in the play, and in this respect there is more fluidity and a real enhancement.

I think, too, for all its slowness and "talkiness" this movie version of "Death of a Salesman" has the undeniable power to move, and it portrays the kind of subject matter it is good for the American screen to portray. The honesty and the dignity of the attempt are unmistakable. For this alone Stanley Kramer and his company may well feel proud.

* * *

I suppose that, in a way, Samuel Goldwyn's "I Want You" has been meant as a sequel to his earlier "The Best Years of Our Lives." There is the same large attempt to sum up the mood and temper of a time, there is the cross-section of a small, representative American city with sets of characters showing different social groups and generations reacting to the same broad events. "I Want You" has been based, so the credits tell us, upon some of Edward Newhouse's stories in *The New Yorker* magazine, but I found it difficult to detect just how this material was used other than to provide names for some of the characters. Mr.

—*From "Death of a Salesman."*
Fredric March—"buffeted figure."

Newhouse's responsibility seems to have ended with the sale of the rights to his work; from there on Irwin Shaw took over. The concoction he has mixed is a little difficult to describe, largely because the structure of the movie is loose, episodic, and unclimactic.

The story of "I Want You," however, revolves around a fairly prosperous family in a Connecticut town. The time is 1950, young men are being drafted again, Reserve officers are being called back, and war has come in Korea. This material would certainly seem to offer some valid and meaningful possibilities, but unfortunately little use is made of them in "I Want You." Instead we are given such hoked-up stuff as Farley Granger grousing over being drafted because he assumes the head of the draft board wants to get him out of effective range of his daughter. Dana Andrews, his older brother, runs a small building firm and goes through some conscience pangs over whom to recommend as essential to defense and whom not to. Dorothy McGuire, as his wife, runs a model home and worries conscientiously about everyone and everything. Peggy Dow, as the Judge's (and draft board head's) daughter loves Granger and comes to Dorothy McGuire for advice. The older generation is represented by Robert Keith and Mildred Dunnock, as the parents of Dana Andrews, and Mr. Keith's problem is a tendency to regret his unheroic participation in the First World War and to build up his self-esteem with pawnshop war souvenirs. Mildred Dunnock in one of the very few effective scenes dramatically shatters these illusions. Near the end of the movie Dana Andrews is about to take up his Reserve Commission, and Dorothy McGuire insists this time that she *just*

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won't cry. She doesn't, by God, but the effort not to nearly fells her and, I'd judge, some feminine members of the audience. At any rate I hope I have made clear the soap-operish nature of the concept of the movie.

Lord knows where it has gone, but Mr. Goldwyn's touch is simply not here. His director, Mark Robson, has heretofore exhibited some capabilities and so has his writer, Irwin Shaw. I guess the main trouble is that our vastly troubled times cannot be dealt with by ringing in the same old quickie set of platitudes. The result always seems to look, no matter how close it comes to actual problems and fears, simply like another of those staple mixtures of soapsuds and molasses. —HOLLIS ALPERT.

SRL Recommends

Death of a Salesman: Reviewed in this issue.

Miracle at Milan: Vittoria de Sica's Hooverville, Italy (or world), with realism upside-down, masquerading as fantastic comedy but issuing in satire. (*SRL* Dec. 15.)

The Big Night: The tragic coming-of-age of an adolescent boy among people knocked down and run over by urban life. Brilliantly directed and played. (*SRL* Dec. 8.)

A Christmas Carol: With the most wonderful Scrooge of all—Alastair Sim. (*SRL* Dec. 1.)

Detective Story: Faithful, moving adaptation of Sidney Kingsley play, well acted and only slightly modified for the innocent movie-goer. (*SRL* Nov. 10.)

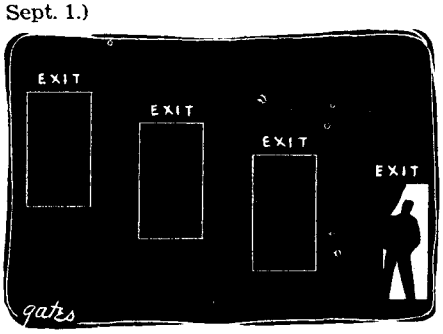
The Browning Version: So accomplished a filming of the Terence Rattigan play about a stiff-lipped English schoolteacher that its basic sentimentality is almost acceptable. (*SRL* Nov. 10.)

The Lavender Hill Mob: Alec Guinness as probably the world's most lovable bank robber. (*SRL* Oct. 13.)

The Red Badge of Courage: A translation of Stephen Crane's Civil War classic into what may well become a classic of twentieth-century American film making. Masterfully directed by John Huston; with Audie Murphy and cartoonist Bill Mauldin. (*SRL* Sept. 29.)

A Place in the Sun: Dreiser's universal values emphasized, his more dated polemics muted, in this well-acted remake of "An American Tragedy," expertly directed by George Stevens. (*SRL* Sept. 1.)

A Streetcar Named Desire: Tennessee William's prize-winning drama remolded for screen with 20-20 insight by Director Elia Kazan and unexcelled cast. (*SRL* Sept. 1.)



NEW EDITIONS

COLERIDGE once wrote a poem in which he said that the gifts with which Heaven had so bounteously endowed him were "sloth-jaundic'd all"—and he has since found many persons to agree with him. In the opinion of most of us, and not unfairly, he was a prodigious projector who lacked the will to carry his projects to completion. Yet the work that he finished and the work that he left unfinished are together enough to have won him a high place among English poets, and a great place in the field of literary criticism. His few "golden" poems are elaborately taught as well as pleasurably read; his "Biographia Literaria" challenges every new generation of students to sift its chaff from its grain; and the mass of his writings furnishes material for successive volumes of selections. The latest of these is "Selected Poetry and Prose of Coleridge" (Modern Library, $1.25), edited by Donald A. Stauffer, one of our more genial and more gifted professors of English literature.

Mr. Stauffer's introduction could hardly be bettered. He gives his reader's a master-key to his author's thought and artistic practice when he says that Coleridge's enduring subject was "relationship," and his life a ceaseless search "for unity in a phantasmal cosmos," whether he was occupied with science, religion, art, ethics, or politics. Coleridge's remarkable tendency to visualize thought is emphasized, and the reader is prepared for the crucial distinctions between Fancy and Imagination, and Understanding and Reason. He is also instructed in the essential fact that ultimate unity, as visioned by Coleridge, is "Life itself"—the copula of thesis and antithesis in a world animated by "*polarity,* or the essential dualism of Nature." In addition to the few major and many minor poems, Mr. Stauffer gives us the "Biographia" complete, a half-dozen specimens of Coleridge's literary criticism, some essays from "The Friend," and selections from "Aids to Reflection" and "Literary Remains." I only regret that he did not see fit to cut from the "Biographia" a certain amount of comparatively worthless material, and thereby make room for a number of letters and at least a few selections from "Anima Poetae," for I believe that to know Coleridge we must know his intimate letters, and I am also one of those—mentioned by Stephen Potter in his introduction to the Nonesuch "Coleridge"—who are inclined "to think that disconnected, notebook composition, with its freedom from all unpleasant compulsions, suited Coleridge best." But here we enter an area of debatable opinion.

ALMOST attractive newcomer to an already numerous company is "The Complete Novels of Jane Austen" (Random House, 2 vols., boxed, $6.50), with a pleasing introduction by Amy Loveman—one of Miss Austen's most faithful admirers—and sympathetically visualized illustrations by Warren Chappell. I must confess that I have always liked these six uniquely delightful novels to be a bit smaller and lighter in the hand than they are in this most recent embodiment; but it is not hard to put aside an old prejudice for the sake of Random House's beautifully legible type. And who can read any one of Miss Austen's matchless opening sentences without reading on? (I have been assured that such persons do exist, but there are some facts I would rather not face.)

Recently published Heritage books ($5 each) include "Don Quixote," "King Henry V," "The Tales of Hoffmann," and "The Old Curiosity Shop." Edy Legrand has brilliantly illustrated John Ormsby's translation of Cervantes's masterpiece, and Irwin Edman (coming a surprising grammatical cropper at the end of his second paragraph) has introduced it, with emphasis on its several levels of meaning. Hugo Steiner-Prag's lithographs, made for Hoffmann's famous but now out-of-fashion stories, are a triumph of the illustrator's art. Shakespeare's sonorous drama, boldly printed, edited by Herbert Arthur Evans, with a note by Mark Van Doren, has been colorfully illustrated with paintings by Fritz Kredel, based upon scenes in Olivier's film version. William Sharp has provided Dickens's comic-mawkish novel with lively likenesses of its characters. And the same characters, as they looked to Cattermole and "Phiz," will be found in the seventy-five plates—remade from the original drawings—that adorn "The Old Curiosity Shop" in the New Oxford Illustrated Dickens edition ($3).

—BEN RAY REDMAN.

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THE USA & THE USSR

(*Continued from page* 11)

China and its pendants on the other, the position of the United States would indeed be perilous."

How can the free world counter-attack without going to war? The author favors vigorous psychological warfare; solidarity in the Western hemisphere; positive efforts abroad, such as were undertaken during the Italian elections of 1948; and a long-range approach to current history which will make repetitions of the Yalta fiasco impossible. The writer urges thoughtful men to "profit by the procession of avoidable errors and unnecessary tragedies, leaving denunciation and partisanship to the pamphleteers."

This sober, calm, and factual approach is characteristic of the manner in which this penetrating work is written.

Character Studies

SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD AUTHORITY. By Margaret Mead. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. 148 *pp.* $4.

By David Hecht

THE barriers that the Soviets have erected to keep American students out of their country are too well known to dwell upon here. Recognizing this fact of scholarly life, the noted anthropologist Margaret Mead, together with a team of specialists, has nevertheless proceeded to survey the aspect of Soviet character indicated by the title.

Working with materials available in the United States, Miss Mead and her colleagues have used the "pattern" or "configuration of culture" method in treating Russian society of today. Such an anthropological approach to Soviet Russia has, as a matter of fact, been sharply criticized by historians and political scientists because it appears to have ignored or underrated the dynamic class and regional differences within the Russian state. It has also been attacked for attempting to trace too intense a connection between Russian political acts and the swaddling of Russian babies. Miss Mead emphasizes, however, that her approach here is to be considered only as complementary to the tools of other social scientists and Slavic specialists. All Miss Mead claims, if this reviewer understands her correctly, is that how a child is taught to eat, for example, may well condition his attitude towards "scarcity or responsibility" in regard to larger adult matters within the culture.

The central problem explored in the study is whether the actualities of Soviet behavior are "congruent with the ideals of behavior . . . constantly preached." In other words, just how devoted *is* the average Russian in Russia to the Communist Party and to the Soviet Government? The proposed answer is that he does not seem to be very devoted to either one.

A vital clue in the deciphering of contemporary Russian character, according to the present analysis, lies in the Soviet belief that the Party leaders are the repository of Marxian Truth, a truth that is absolute. The rest of the population must conform to the directives which emanate from this source of wisdom. Such a situation obviously makes for increasing rigidities all down the line of command. If the Truth (or "line") alters, as it must, the only way of enforcing such a shift is to make the hitherto existing administrative personnel recant from their former zeal or to replace them—by imprisonment, execution, or simple removal—with new zealots. This is not a very workable system. It can only continue as a result of the existence of widespread bribery, corruption, "accommodation," and, of course, terroristic regimentation. Compromise, especially with other systems of thought, becomes theoretically impossible because Truth is One. Ideas of compromise can therefore become treasonable ideas and these latter are equated with treasonable acts.

This reviewer must confess that he finds none of this highly original. Moreover, the book suffers from naivete and tameness. The findings are not quite digested. One sometimes has the impression of wandering in a maze of raw research material written heavily and presented dully. However, as tentative notes Miss Mead's book is worthwhile—but to the specialist rather than to the general reader.

FICTION

(*Continued from page* 16)

for the racial arrogance of some of his fellow Americans.

Appel's hero fights his war across a flat, journalistic prose terrain littered here and there with cliches as big as boulders and dotted with marshy areas of overwriting. The men and women who swarm around him—Huks, GIs, bandits, collaborationist politicians, and businessmen, and a well-born Manila girl who joins the guerrillas to be near the American she loves—are for the most part easy, skin-deep characterizations. It is Appel's interested eye, roving over the whole social scene of occupied Manila and the guerrilla country beyond, that excuses these shortcomings by giving his novel the special interest of a good documentary.

Fiction Notes

THE PHYSICIANS. By Hazel Lin. John Day. $3. Miss Lin's artless little tale concerns itself with the growing up of one Hsiao-chen. Reared in the household of her grandfather—a renowned physician in the ancient tradition of the Chinese—Hsiao-chen is determined from earliest childhood to become a doctor. This she finally does, achieving a renown at least equal to her grandfather's, only hers is as a doctor in the scientific tradition of the Western world. What slight conflict there is derives from this contrast between these two traditions, a rather old theme which isn't hammered at too hard by Miss Lin. Her stress is rather on reconciling the two worlds, which she does very neatly in simple, somewhat girlish prose which is just about the right weight for her slight tale.

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA. By Ari Ibn-Zahav. Crown. $3.50. The need for another retailing of the David legend would appear to be somewhat dubious. Ibn-Zahav has, however, attempted it, adding quite a bit of invention to the standard ingredients. All the set scenes are here: David the shepherd, David and his harp, David and Goliath, David and Jonathan, and of course David and Bathsheba. It's that last business that the author has used as the framework for his somewhat lachrymose tale. Seems David had loved the girl since childhood and all those other amours — numerous though they were—were merely at-

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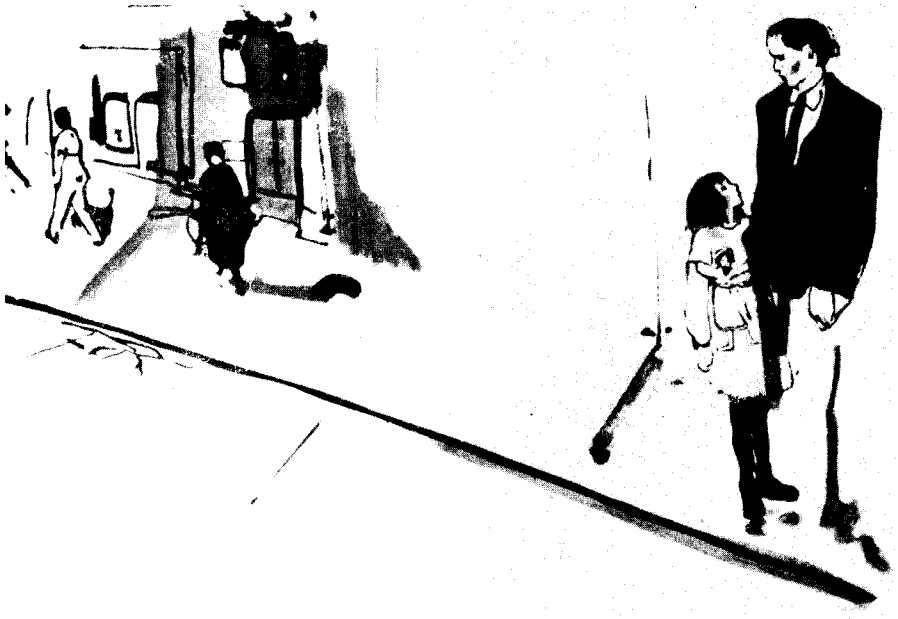
tempts to get to his dream girl. It is then no wonder that he loses his head when he spies her naked on a roof-top and thereafter goes on to conceive Solomon. It all adds up to historical nonsense, more pretentious in its treatment than the average soap opera but of scarcely more moment.

THE REVOLT OF MAMIE STOVER. By William Bradford Huie. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $3. With a few minor — and one major — variations Mamie Stover belongs in the established tradition of fictional prostitutes. She is, despite Mr. Huie's professed scorn for the cliche, really a good girl at heart and, again as usual, there's quite a bit of gold in that there heart. The major switch is in the way Mamie gets along. Her success comes not through the usual method of finding one rich protector, but through a mass production assault on the United States forces stationed in the Hawaiian Islands.

Definitely not for the kiddies, this opus is machine-made to appeal to the same audience that buys up the paper books with the almost naked girls on the cover. If anything it's a little more vulgar than those covers, which may be why it will cost three dollars if you want to savor its sophomoric prurience.

ONCE OVER LIGHTLY. By David Niven. Prentice-Hall. $2.75. An actor of reputation on stage and screen, David Niven has now become a triple-threat man with the concoction of this novel. Threat is perhaps too strong a word to associate with the cream-puff airiness of the narrative. In any event, here is a novel, and I, for one, am prepared to believe that the actor wrote it himself. It's all about the adventures of ex-Lieutenant John Hamilton, one of those handsome British

—By Doreumus, from "Once Over Lightly."



—By Tom Keogh, from "Street Music."

characters full of whimsical charm and a gay way with ladies—very like the character Mr. Niven portrays in the movies, as a matter of fact. How, broke, he comes to the New World as companion to a dog, gets himself involved with an assortment of "characters" straight from the Hollywood stockyards, meets and marries the beautiful dress model, and goes on to conquer Hollywood as an accidental actor provides the framework for a series of farcical episodes in which the satire is somewhat labored but the slap-stick elements are sure-fire, or generally regarded as such. In a prefatory note Mr. Niven says the book is not an autobiography.

SOLITAIRE. By Pierre Larthomas. Translated by Betty Askwith. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50. This tight little excursion into the troubled psyche of a lonely man has somewhat the quality though not the negative purpose of the best of the existentialist writing that has been coming out of France. M. Larthomas would have us understand how a man, driven by fear and insecurity to barricade his spirit against the world, could break the shell when compelled to take responsibility for a murderer and to share his thoughts.

The writing is beautifully spare, trimmed carefully to reveal the simplicity of story and theme. The book can be read at a sitting, but, despite its somber materials, it leaves a warm glow of enriched understanding and hope.

STREET MUSIC. By Theodora Keogh. Farrar, Straus & Young. $3. Both the "Street" and the "Music" in Theodora Keogh's third novel have a strange, other-worldly quality. The scenes are real enough, vividly so—a Paris neighborhood, its cafés, *pensions,* and parks. Here Claude, a music critic, returns to live with his young American wife, Linnet. And here is worked out the somewhat frightening melodrama of having Claude grow up out of the childhood fantasies of rebellion which have persisted into his supposed maturity.

Mrs. Keogh's prose has haunting beauty, and those most important characters in her novel, the children, possess that awful combination of evil and innocence which only Colette has captured with equal success. She has created almost a dozen here, real, lovable, and frightening. You will not soon forget Felice, that doomed but indestructible child of the Paris streets who becomes the focus for the major conflict in Mrs. Keogh's disturbing drama. —EDWARD J. FITZGERALD.

DON'T TOUCH ME. By MacKinlay Kantor. Random House. $3. MacKinlay Kantor has written a great deal of fiction: some good, some indifferent. In respect to quality as well as chronology his latest novel belongs close to the bottom of the list. One might, in fact, take the book's title as a piece of good advice to the prospective reader.

"Don't Touch Me" is primarily about the love life of Major Gregory Wolford, a B-29 pilot on duty in Korea. When Mr. Kantor is not recounting the amatory history of the major, he fills in the time by describing the bedtime exploits of his brother officers—with geishas, with nymphomaniac American stenographers, and with an occasional brother officer's wife. But mainly he is concerned with the ruling passion of his hero's life, one An-

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tonia Borley, whom the major loved and left years ago in the States, and who providentially turns up at the Japanese base where his unit is billeted.

True, she is now married to a fighter pilot, but to a man like Wolford, who has the power to consummate love telepathically, this is not an insuperable barrier. Before "Wolf" and Tony are reunited, however, each high spot and tiny tidbit of their old love affair is trotted out and re-enacted. Wolf seems to have total recall as well as extra-sensory perception, and by the time he is through dredging up the remains of his amour, the whole business has thoroughly palled on the reader.

Mr. Kantor's writing shows occasional traces of his narrative ability, particularly in an excellent account of a bombing mission. But most of "Don't Touch Me" is written in an argot reminiscent of the comic strips. Says an Air Force chaplain to a recent widow, "Want we should make with a little prayer?"

—MARTIN LEVIN.

SIDDHARTHA. By Hermann Hesse. Translated by Hilda Rosner. New Directions. $1.50. The clarity of this short tale allows one to look through to its profound depth. It is a moral allegory, based on Indian mysticism, which tries to solve the enigma of human loneliness and discontent. The hero, Siddhartha, endowed with all the virtues, goes through the fires of various experiences to emerge to a state of peace and holiness. Before he has achieved this beatitude he has tasted the pleasures of being a mendicant wanderer, then consort to a courtesan, then wealthy man of business, and finally companion to a humble ferryman, whose wisdom comes from the endlessly murmuring river. His final peace comes only after he has had his full share of pleasure and pain. As a moral tale it is free from pretension, pride, and smugness; and for that reason its message is most persuasive. Its effect is reinforced by the limpid, effortless style of the translation.

Although other books by Hesse, who was Nobel Prize winner in 1946, have been published in English, this is the first translation of "Siddhartha." It originally appeared in German in 1923, but we are not enlightened anywhere in the book or on the bookjacket, which ambiguously dates it as ten years old. The New Directions press has been scolded before, by the present and other reviewers, for omitting or falsifying such data; one wonders why it persists when it is so admirable in so many other ways.

—ROBERT HALSBAND.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE MAN WHO DIED TWICE *George Harmon Coxe* (Knopf: $2.50)	Patriarch living out days on Barbados meets abrupt end, complicating problem of soi-disant nephew; local police ask the questions.	Slow starter, owing to necessity for getting large cast on stage; this done, speedometer needle picks up.	Average
THE CAT AND CAPRICORN *D. B. Olsen* (Crime Club: $2.50)	Much-wed Cal. gal's demise gives Miss Rachel Murdock (plus cat) chance to snoop profitably at down-at-heel dude ranch.	Pleasantly strung together, but plot rather elaborately contrived; setting and characters nicely sketched.	Easy-going
THE PAPER THUNDERBOLT *Michael Innes* (Dodd, Mead: $3)	Ne'er-do-well British youth, captured by weird crew, escapes, flees Oxfordward; university center throbs with extracurricular activity.	Pursuit lively at times, but yarn often bogs down in morass of sesquipedalian whimsy.	Uneven
PISTOLS FOR TWO *Aaron Marc Stein* (Crime Club: $2.50)	Manhattan archeologists (he and she) find apparent duel victim; second killing ensues; scholarship has edge on cops.	Ingenious setting, with abundant professional detail; characters in general over- or underdone.	Too chatty
DEATH IN A MILLION LIVING ROOMS *Pat McGerr* (Crime Club: $2.50)	Like it says, TV actor konks off in N.Y. studio while show is on, driving sponsor to brink of thrombosis; cast and cops worry it out.	Technical background interesting; lots of chatter, but that's how they live; handling generally smooth.	Specialty number
THE FAR CRY *Fredric Brown* (Dutton: $2.50)	K.C. real estater, nervous wreck, moves in on Taos, N.M., to recuperate; is captivated by eight-year-old murder, takes it over.	Personality problems tend to slow up detection; story moves when given chance; pace hot at climax.	Good, save as noted
DEAD YESTERDAY *Ruth Fenisong* (Crime Club: $2.50)	Past of alcoholic Yankee countess, N.Y. resident, comes alive to produce pair of female deaths; cops fetch skeleton out of closet.	Family complications (easy to follow) involve teen-age nephew who plays dick.	Period piece
NIPPED IN THE BUD *Stuart Palmer* (Mill-Morrow: $2.50)	TV actor is curtained after wild ad-libbing; schoolmarm Hildegarde Withers trails witness from N.Y. to Tijuana and shows cops how it was.	Trans-border mise-en-scène engagingly handled; dénouement a mite tricky.	Amiable
SKELETONS AND CUPBOARDS *Ralph Arnold* (Macmillan: $2.50)	Unpopular but rich Australian rents English country seat and brains (his) quickly bespatter fine old lawn. Chief Constable Chaplin sweeps 'em up.	Landlordly family tries to hide miscellaneous scandals, thus muddying issue. Humor glints occasionally.	Spotty
HANDBOOK FOR POISONERS *Raymond T. Bond*, editor (Rinehart: $3.50)	Dozen yarns by top-notchers all involving demises by premeditated internal violence. Stories good, non-shopworn.	78-page preface alone worth the price, particularly if there's someone around you don't like.	Admirable
THE MURDER THAT WOULDN'T STAY SOLVED *Hampton Stone* (Simon & Schuster: $2.50)	Murder in Class NG Manhattan hotel, followed by slaughter in Queens, gives Asst. D.A. Gibson, fresh from operation, chance to solve cases sitting down.	Much ratiocination and recapitulation, not enough motion, but Q. and A. technique has its merits.	Medium
PAGODA *James Atlee Phillips* (Macmillan: $2.75)	Yank air-transport boss in roiling Burma tangles with double-dealing, love, murder, and sugar in gas-lines.	Background unusual, and well handled; treatment lively and knowledgeable.	Smooth job

—SERGEANT CUFF.

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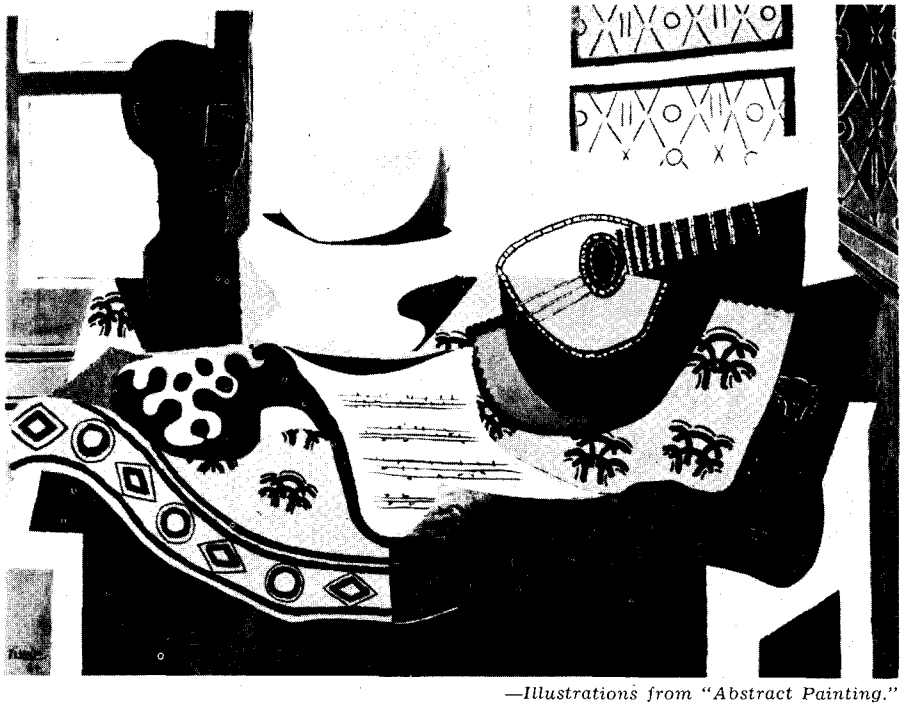
ART & ARCHITECTURE

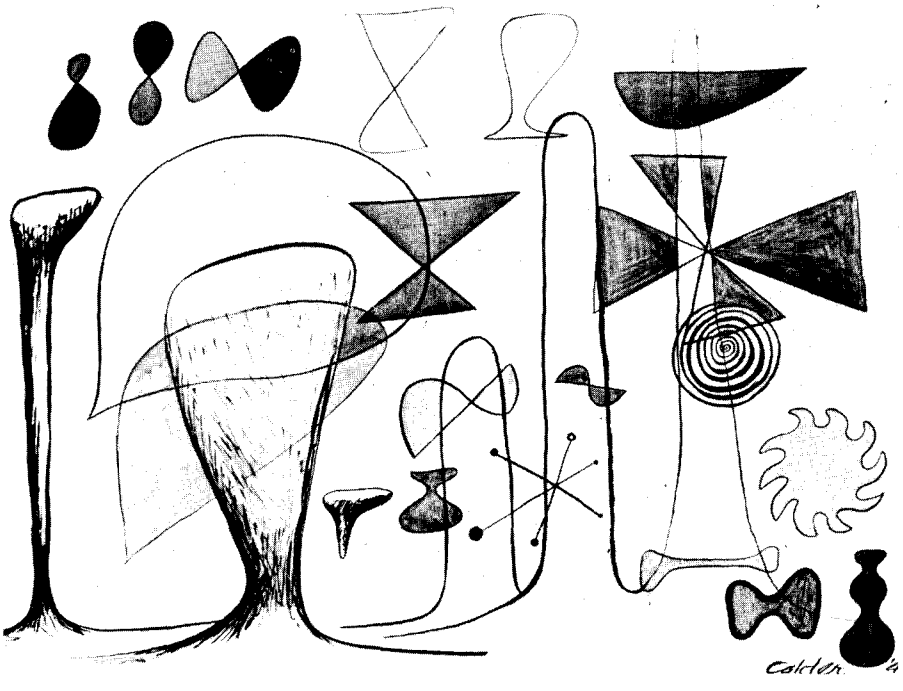
(*Continued from page 15*)

what is it that ties together the American artists—not as Americans, but as a group that has created a style recognizably different from its predecessors in both France and the United States. (This would also help explain why the more geometrically-minded men like Glarner have been omitted.) This would help us to a better grasp of those qualities of vigor, flexibility, willingness to explore analytic procedures and sub-conscious motivations side by side which, coupled with a sometimes hindering ego-identification with their art, have produced a new school. But by writing in so lovely a fashion about these men Mr. Hess has done them a great service by showing how attractive and unforbidding their art is if the spectator's vigorous spirit will match the artist's own.



—*Illustrations from "Abstract Painting."*

"The Red Tablecloth," by Pablo Picasso.



"A New Alphabet of Forms," by Alexander Calder.

Art Book Notes

NINETEENTH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE IN BRITAIN. By Reginald Turnor. British Book Centre, New York. $4.75. Architecturally speaking the nineteenth was an angry century in England and in America, too. Even though Norman Shaw and McKim, Mead & White ended by championing symmetrical façades and making much of perfection of proportions before the century was over, the charms of asymmetry were too novel, and the Gothic and the other romantic revivals too enchanting for the serene ideals of the Renaissance to enjoy anything like their old prestige. Worshiping the Gothic, at first for its poetic associations and later for its lessons in structural dynamics, Victorian architects couldn't help stumbling on the notion that integrity was all important, the very notion on which modern architecture is founded.

Whether the nineteenth century was right or wrong, or whether we are now headed in the right direction, these are questions which might be argued until the end of time, but it is hardly reasonable to suppose that a critic who loathes the romantic revivals and dreads the present-day emphasis on the organic is the proper person to write the history of nineteenth-century architecture in Great Britain. Unfortunately, Reginald Turnor is just such an historian. He is positive that the Gothic revival was no more of a blessing than the common cold, and far from feeling any sympathy for the tragic careers of Pugin and Ruskin labels one a crank and the other a menace. As Turnor views the century "taste" was everywhere declining, which is another way of saying that Victorians refused to behave like Georgians.

Though few readers will agree that the Victorians made a mess of things when they "threw away their chance of adapting the Georgian heritage smoothly to the uses of modern materials and engineering," and though scholars may not be the only ones to wince at the author's colloquial style, no one can deny that this volume, like all books that hear the Batsford imprint, is richly illustrated.

—WAYNE ANDREWS.

THE ART NEWS ANNUAL. Art Foundation, New York. $3. This is probably the only American counterpart of the hefty special numbers issued by European magazines for Christmas gift-giving. It follows the formula set in previous years with equally satisfactory results. There are, as usual, three long feature articles handsomely illustrated: "Interpreting Masterpieces,"

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by the *Art News*'s scholarly editor, Alfred M. Frankfurter; "Surrealism," by Cyril Connolly; and a dual-piece on Matisse, by George Salles, director of the French National Museum, and E. Tériade, editor of *Verve*.

In his discussion of old masters Mr. Frankfurter analyzes twenty-four of the "best" paintings in the Kress Collection in our National Gallery, documenting it with full-page color reproductions of each and many smaller pictures *en texte*. Mr. Connolly treats surrealism historically, beginning with its Dada origins in Switzerland during World War I and bidding it a sad farewell as it gradually disintegrated. This is the only objective discussion of the movement that has ever come my way. The two Matisse pieces are especially timely because of the current exhibition honoring the painter at New York's Modern Museum. M. Salles writes about "A Visit to Matisse"; more interesting is "Matisse Speaks," in which M. Tériade, a close friend of the master, presents a collection of the highly enlightening statements the painter made about himself and art in general.

—L. R. SANDER.

GOOD TASTE COSTS NO MORE. By Richard Gump. Doubleday. $5. If anyone ought to know the inside story of the furniture business, it's Richard Gump, the present head of the famous San Francisco store, and not the least entertaining chapter of "Good Taste Costs No More" deals with the tricks of the trade. This is, of course, an old story for Richard Gump to be telling; he warns us that "the public has never created a specific demand; it is fashioned by manufacturers, designers, artists, and art dealers."

Gump himself wouldn't compare "Good Taste Costs No More" with such serious studies of interior decoration as Edith Wharton's "The Decoration of Houses." This is no manual, but a pamphlet of common sense for the average American who, likely as not, is baffled by the double-talk that passes for genuine advice in many a decorator's salon. No prig, Gump sympathizes both with Mary, the girl who yearns for a cozy home, and with her sister Joan, who goes stark modern.

Like countless others who've tackled the problem of taste, Gump can't define what he means by the word. "The quickest way to acquire it," he tells us, "is to fasten your attention upon someone who has, watch what he admires and selects, and find out *why*." He adds that "the things with which you choose to live should be expressive of you and suitable to the way you live." Which is as close as he comes to laying down the law.

—W. A.

On the Record

A Personal Choice by Edward Tatnall Canby

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER ALBUM NUMBER NUMBER OF RECORDS	*Recording Technique, Surface* ENGINEERING	PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
PIANISM—CHOPIN, SCHUMANN, BRAHMS		
Chopin CHOPIN: PRELUDES, OP. 28. a. Brailowsky. RCA Victor LM 1150 b. Arrau. Columbia ML 4420	▶ Both are good; the Columbia is a bit fuller, steadier, with less twang and percussion.	Arrau shows a clear musical superiority; his phrasing, rhythm are much superior, tone more varied, poetic sense of the music better realized, his lighter, more intimate touch truer to Chopin.
CHOPIN: FOUR "BALLADES." Earl Wild. Concert Hall CHS 1401	▶ First-class piano sound, full-bottomed, not percussive at all. A trace less steady than Columbia's below.	In spite of a decided stiffness in the fluid Chopin figuration, Wild's playing has some lovely moments, is sincere and musical.
CHOPIN: SONATA No. 3 IN B MINOR. R. Firkusny. Columbia ML 2201	▶ Outstanding for its steadiness though sound is a bit hard in louder parts. A good job.	Fine musicianship here; a sense for phrasing and balance, a stress on the lyric portions, the loud and fast climaxes light and well shaped; not a trace of pounding! Most enjoyable.
CHOPIN: "NOCTURNES" (Complete). Artur Rubinstein. RCA Victor LM 6005 (2)	▶ Not too happy—this is percussive, with bad peaks in some notes, a thinnish bass. But distortion and waver are low, sound is entirely listenable.	The tone quality (aided by recording) is hard as nails, yet the playing is surprisingly lyric and expressive. An extrovert's "Nocturnes," though.
A CHOPIN PIANO RECITAL. "Ballade" No. 3, Scherzo No. 3: Arrau. Prelude in E mi., "Impromptu" No. 2: Kraus. Nocturnes No. 2, No. 9: Joyce. Decca DL 8517	▶ Aha! Here come the greats, in samplings—the faultless rhythm of Kraus, like Landowska, the pearly pianissimo color of Joyce. Arrau, larger scaled here, more straightforward, stands well with the two ladies in musicianship. The Kraus items are old, sub-standard technically (but worth it), Arrau sounds new and good, Joyce also. Crackly surface.	
Schumann SCHUMANN: "SYMPHONIC ETUDES" (expanded version); TOCCATA IN C. Lubka Kolessa. Concert Hall CHS 1111	▶ Excellent piano in rather dry studio-type acoustics; a lighter sound than the Concert Hall Wild disc above.	Fleet fingers, but only fair Schumann; there's the feeling of too many notes, the simple, sincere Schumann dimmed with it all. One is too conscious of piano.
SCHUMANN: "KREISLERIANA"; "NOVELETTE" No. 8. Ray Lev. Concert Hall 1102	▶ Hard, thin, jangling piano, evidently taken from earlier disc. (On small machines it won't be too bad.)	Bad recording makes a muddle of Lev's powerhouse Schumann—an admirably strong-minded playing, musically not well tailored.
SCHUMANN: "FASCHINGSSCHWANK AUS WIEN." BRAHMS: "VARS. ON A THEME OF SCHUMANN," OP. 8 (1854). Jacqueline Blancard. Vanguard VRS 416	▶ Basically fine piano though a persistent slight flutter or distortion shows up in louder notes. Not bothersome.	Blancard hits nearest to the elusive Schumann expression —this is good. The youthful Brahms work is a bit long-winded, sentimental, with good Brahms moments.
Brahms BRAHMS: PIANO SONATA No. 3 IN F MINOR (1853). Artur Rubinstein. RCA Victor LM 1189	▶ This could use a larger-toned, more resonant sound, but otherwise this is OK.	The warmly reckless Brahms of twenty — Rubenstein's potent technique isn't bad for the relatively black-and-white music. But better try Katchen, on London, too.
BRAHMS: "VARS. ON A THEME OF HANDEL," OP. 26; INTERMEZZI OP. 117, No. 1, No. 3. Lubka Kolessa. Concert Hall CHS 1108	▶ Excellent again, comparable to Schumann disc above; but the different style of music here is better suited to this sound—brilliant, a bit on dead side.	Similarly, in this more outward and showy music Kolessa's fleet fingers count more than in the moody Schumann (above). Brilliant, hardish playing. The Intermezzi are restrained, not massive.

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The Film Forum

AUTHORS AND BOOKS

The Saturday Review's Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films

EDITOR'S NOTE: *E. M. Forster in his book "Aspects of the Novel" (Harcourt, Brace) points out that books have to be read if we are to discover what they contain. "A few savage tribes eat them," he adds, "but reading is the only method of assimilation revealed to the West." Mr. Forster's witty remarks go unchallenged despite the efforts of some of our Pacific Coast natives to demonstrate that literature should be seen and not necessarily read. Of course, many films - from - books are eminently praiseworthy—"Oliver Twist," "The River," "The Red Badge of Courage," and so forth—but in general films are best when they tell their own stories in a purely cinematic way. Here are some slightly literary films which any book-lover should welcome.*

BALZAC. *Produced by Compas Films. Distributed for rental and purchase by A. F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. (20 min.)*

This film, directed by Jean Vidal, with music by Guy Bernard and an American commentary by Sherry Mangan, was made in France to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the death of Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850). "Balzac" is biography in the new documentary tradition. The hero is not called back to life in the shape of a popular movie star. He is himself as he appeared in contemporary portraits, caricatures, and a single extant photograph. His life is reconstructed around similar reproductions of the people he knew, the women in his life, scenes of the Paris he knew, and the house in Passy, which still stands as when he worked and lived there. As in "1848" the film is far from static and slow; rather it is a whirlwind presentation of personalities and events in the life of one literary superman.

Caricatures of the time show Balzac as a formidable creature distinguished in appearance and temperament by his "bull neck, lion's mane, and eyes of a wild animal tamer." Early in life Balzac abandoned everything to his ambition to become a famous author. Writing for sixteen or eighteen hours a day, sleeping only from early evening to midnight, he managed to chalk up forty novels while still a comparative youth. One of the film's interesting sequences shows how he worked; freshly penned manuscript was sent direct to the printer and was returned by Balzac time and again with complete instructions for changes in the galleys as many as seven times for one chapter.

In the course of a full life dedicated to the search for "love and fame" Balzac wrote ninety-one novels with 2,000 characters continuing from volume to volume. "I have carried about in my brain an entire society," he once remarked.

"Balzac" in its brief twenty minutes goes deeply into the life and personality of the fabulous novelist with the famous turquoise-tipped walking cane. The film has already been selected to accompany Renoir's feature film "The River" on theatrical programs in leading cities outside New York—an attractive package for any *SRL* film-goer.

W. B. YEATS—A TRIBUTE. *Produced by the National Film Institute of Ireland. Distributed for rental and purchase by Brandon Films, 200 West 57th St., New York 19, N. Y. (23 min.)*

When news of the planned production of this film was announced in *The Saturday Review* a year or so ago many readers wrote in to ask where they could see or rent it. Now the film is available for 16mm. rental and purchase, and together with "Balzac" it marks a highly successful documentary approach to literature and writers. The Yeats film is literally a tribute, and only incidentally a partial biography of the poet. It is a film about Ireland, about Sligo County in Western Ireland, where Yeats spent much of his youth and where in the churchyard of Drumcliffe he was buried several years ago. In sharpest contrasts of dark and light the lakes and hills, trees and dwellings have a look that is distinctly Gaelic. Lines from Yeats's poetry, which make up most of the film's commentary and which are read by such unpronounceables as Michael Macliammoir and Siobhan McKenna, are at times difficult to hear and follow, but the meter and tone are vastly impressive. The film is an awesome tribute to the land and the poet—but it is always a tribute, never a mere appreciation, not at all a travelogue.

LOVE OF BOOKS. *Distributed by British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y. (10 min.)*

The film outlines the history of British bookmaking, which in this case should be taken to mean the printing, binding, and other aspects of the respected trade of putting paper and ink together to be read, studied, or placed on library shelves. Emphasis in the film is on modern craftsmanship, beginning with the work of William Morris in the past century and continuing to the handsome volumes of present-day Britain. Soon to be released.—CECILE STARR.

*For rentals consult the list of *SRL* Film Referral Libraries, available at 10c a copy from Film Department, Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

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(Continued from page 41)

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By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Lifting apparatuses.	53 91 139 1 88 177
B. Science of remedies, surgical and medical.	50 52 30 64 26 47 122
C. The collection of Halakoth, the basis of the Talmud.	90 186 175 135 141 63 49
D. Blood in the veins of the gods (class. myth.).	143 94 57 187 39
E. Unsymmetrical; unbalanced.	158 82 179 144 54 71 12 44
F. English playwright and conspicuous Shakespearean critic; hero of Pope's "Dunciad" (1688-1744).	118 150 136 67 69 28 65 56
G. Conspicuous.	59 35 93 89 23 170 188 102 167 66 128
H. Winked.	36 87 138 48 21 157 2 123 112 60
I. U. S. National Monument in Colorado, valley in eroded volcanic rock.	146 153 120 84 126 38 133
J. Lacking in gladness or gayety.	32 45 22 142 149 7 159 92 99
K. Results; consequences.	14 81 134 25 97 151 46 171 10
L. Prussian field marshal who aided Wellington in victory at Waterloo.	110 55 178 29 124 70 117
M. Pertaining to the Panhellenic games in Greece every two years.	147 73 185 119 31 106 155 16

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
N. Voiced.	107 13 98 41 51 180 162
O. Pertaining to a Semitic people, related to the Hebrews and living east of the Dead Sea (Bib.).	121 75 42 103 173 145 15 160 115
P. National scenic park in British Columbia, Canada.	19 33 100 125
Q. Battle, June 24, 1859; French and Italians beat the Austrians.	130 58 105 86 116 181 163 34 132
R. Any of numerous sea birds, gull-like but smaller; sea swallows.	114 96 166 43 182
S. Northward from a large city in any state, esp. for an election vote.	9 74 40 148 172 4 140
T. Quality of being wildly gay.	37 8 108 176 83 72 137 152
U. Indians who lived in Georgia, but migrated West with the Creeks.	111 24 6 95 129 17
V. Best-known play by Anna Mowatt, 1845, subtitled "Life in New York."	27 164 161 62 76 127 3
W. Asks earnestly (var. sp.).	113 174 131 156 78 5 165 109
X. Name of Peary's ship on his 1905-6 attempt to discover the North Pole.	11 80 85 61 169 20 101 77 183
Y. Work by R. L. Stevenson with Lloyd Osbourne, his stepson.	104 18 168 68 184 79 154

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in, you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

										1 A	2 H	3 V	4 S	5 W		6 U	7 J	8						
9 S	10 K		11 X	12 E	13 N	14 K	15 O	16 M	17 U		18 Y	19 P		20 X	21 H	22								
23 G	24 U	25 K		26 B	27 V		28 F		29 L	30 B	31 M	32 J	33 P	34 Q		35								
36 H	37 T	38 I	39 D	40 S	41 N	42 O	43 R	44 E	45 J	46 K	47 B		48 H	49 C	50 B	51								
	52 B	53 A	54 E	55 L	56 F	57 D	58 Q	59 G	60 H		61 X	62 V	63 C	64 B	65 F									
66 G	67 F	68 Y		69 F	70 L		71 E	72 T	73 M	74 S	75 O	76 V	77 X	78 W	79 Y									
80 X	81 K		82 E	83 T	84 I		85 X	86 Q		87 H	88 A	89 G		90 C	91 A	92								
93 G		94 D	95 U	96 R	97 K	98 N	99 J	100 P	101 X	102 G		103 O	104 Y	105 Q	106 M	107								
108 T	109 W		110 L	111 U		112 H	113 W	114 R	115 O	116 Q	117 L		118 F	119 M	120 I									
121 O	122 B	123 H	124 L	125 P	126 I	127 V	128 G	129 U	130 Q	131 W		132 Q	133 I		134 K	135								
136 F		137 T	138 H	139 A	140 S	141 C	142 J	143 D	144 E	145 O		146 I	147 M	148 S	149 J									
150 F	151 K	152 T		153 I	154 Y	155 M	156 W	157 H	158 E	159 J	160 O	161 V		162 N	163 Q	164								
165 W	166 R	167 G	168 Y	169 X		170 G	171 K	172 S	173 O	174 W	175 C	176 T		177 A	178 L	179								
180 N	181 Q	182 R	183 X	184 Y	185 M	186 C	187 D	188 G																

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 5 of this issue.

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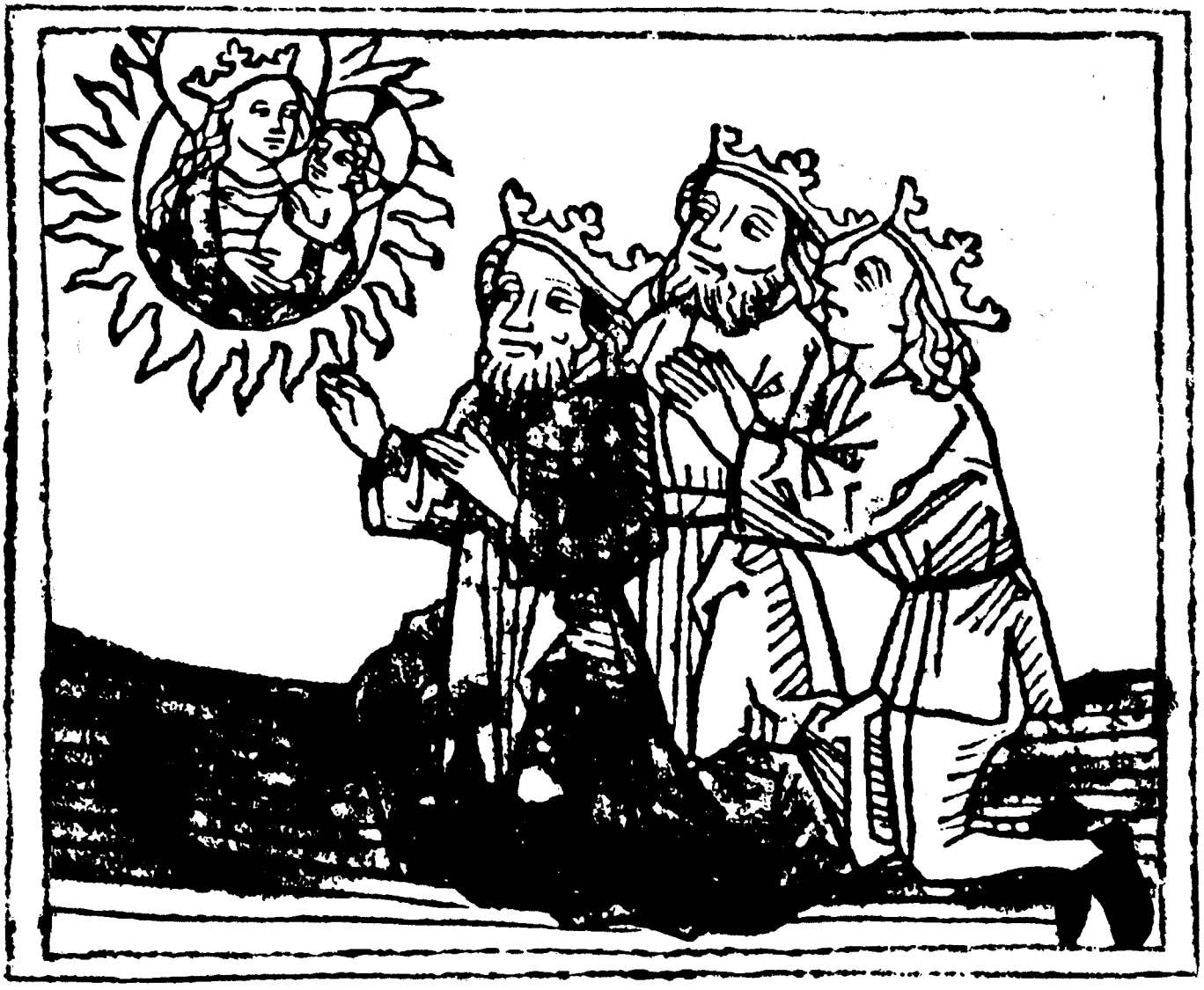

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